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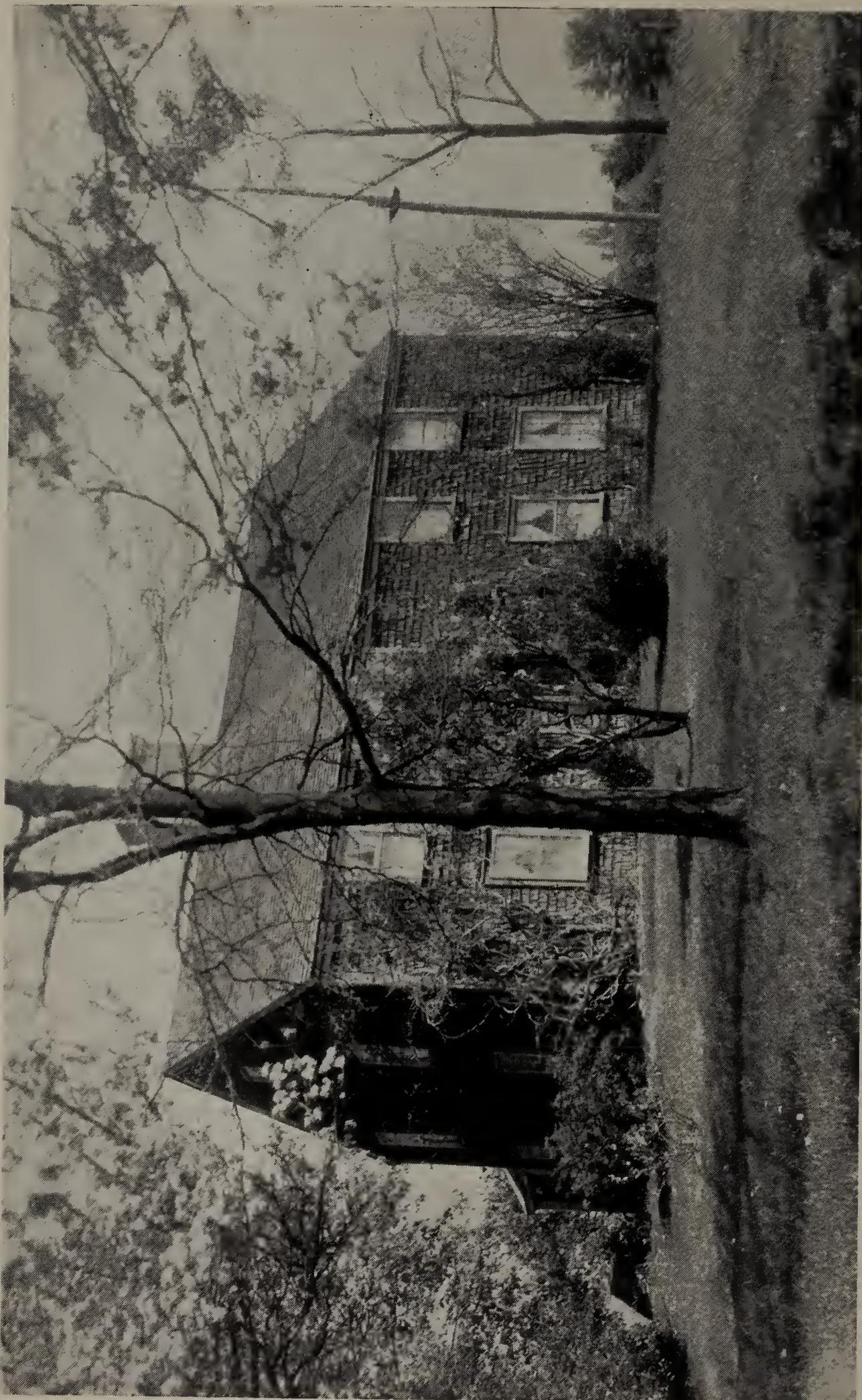
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*Nathan Chase, Photographer*

*"John Alden House." Erected in 1653.*



# THE STORY OF DUXBURY

1637-1937

EDITED BY  
E. WALDO LONG



THE DUXBURY TERCENTENARY COMMITTEE  
DUXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

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BY DUXBURY TERCENTENARY COMMITTEE

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE Duxbury Tercentenary Committee wishes to express to the many Duxbury citizens who have co-operated with the committee, and to Mr. Edward Bourget, Mr. Elroy Thompson and others of the Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration of Massachusetts, its appreciation of their assistance in assembling data used in this volume.

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## FOREWORD

THE year 1937 marks the tercentenary of the founding of Duxbury as an independent town. The *History of Duxbury*, published by Justin Winsor in 1849, contains the annals of the first two centuries.

This volume pays particular attention to the development of Duxbury during the one hundred years now brought to a close. It is hoped that what is here set forth may interest not only contemporary readers, but those whose duty it may be, one hundred years hence, to write the history of the fourth century.



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## PREFACE

**A**T the town meeting of December 21, 1931, it was voted: "That the moderator be authorized to appoint a committee of five to investigate and report at the annual town meeting in March next what action, if any, it will be appropriate for the town to take with reference to observing the 300th anniversary of the year in which residents of 'Duxburie growing to some competente number . . . sued to be dismissed and became a body of themselves.' "

As the eventual result of the report of the committee appointed in accordance with this vote, the Duxbury Tercentenary Committee was formed on June 12, 1935, to arrange for a fitting observance of the town's tercentenary.

It was decided to observe the occasion by the marking of historic sites, by a public pageant, and by the publication of a historical record of the past one hundred years in Duxbury.

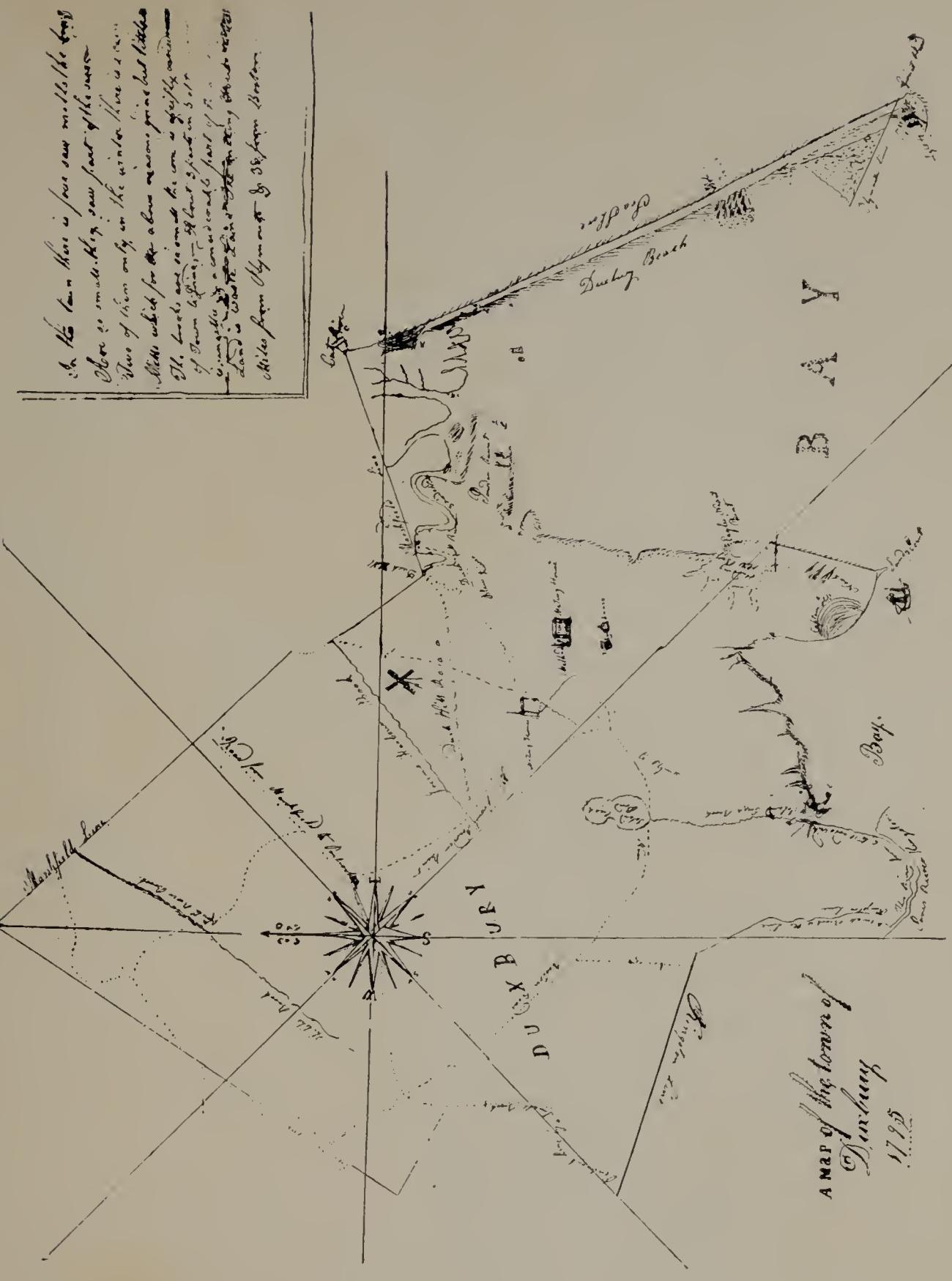
The committee includes Harry F. Swift, chairman, and Mrs. Paul C. Peterson, secretary; Dr. Reuben Peterson, chairman of a sub-committee for marking historic sites; Dr. H. C. Bumpus, chairman of a sub-committee to supervise publication of

*Preface*

the history; Sidney C. Soule, Charles R. Crocker, Miss Mary N. Gifford, William H. Young, George E. Green, Professor Edward C. Moore, Harry R. Bradley, Oliver L. Barker, Miss Elizabeth E. Bolton, Mrs. H. Parker Whittington and Walter G. Prince.

THE STORY OF DUXBURY  
1637-1937





Duxbury in 1795 (Original in collection of Duxbury Rural and Historical Society)



## BOUNDARIES

DUXBURY was the first town to buy land from the Indians and receive a deed from their chief. The deed to the purchased land still is in existence, the property of the Old Bridgewater Historical Society.

Bearing the "signature" of Massasoit—a human hand of which the index finger points to the terms of the agreement—the deed reads:

"In consideration of the aforesaid bargain and sale, we, the said Myles Standish, Samuel Nash, and Constant Southworth, do bind ourselves to pay unto the said Ousamequin, for and in consideration of the said tract of land, as followeth:—

Seven coats, a yard and a half in a coat.

Nine hatchets.

Eight hoes.

Twenty knives.

Four moose skins.

Ten yards and a half of cotton.

MYLES STANDISH

SAMUEL NASH

CONSTANT SOUTHWORTH"

At the time of its incorporation as a town, the district known to the Indians as Mattakeeset, was called Duxbury by the English in honor of Captain

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

Standish, whose ancestral home in England was Duxbury Hall.

At first the boundaries were not fixed. It was in response to a petition by "those of ye cheefe sorte, as Mr. Winslow, Captain Standish, Mr. Alden, and many others," according to Governor Bradford's record, that the court on March 12, 1641, "ordered that the bounds of Duxburrow Township shall begin where Plymouth bounds do end; namely, at a brook falling into Blackwater, and so along the Massachusetts path to the North River."

Massachusetts path was the trail leading from Plymouth to the Massachusetts capital, Boston.

In 1656, a part of Duxbury became Bridgewater. Two years later, the western part of Pembroke was added to Duxbury.

On March 6, 1683, the boundaries between Duxbury and Marshfield were defined in the following terms:

"From the Rock that is flat on the top near the house of Clement King, Northwest to the North River, and have marked several trees in the range and about twelve or fifteen rods North Eastward of Samuel Hatch's house, we raised a heape of stones, and from thence to Green's Harbor fresh, the path to be the bound, and on the Eastward side of said fresh, just above where the said way goes through it, we raised a heape of stones, and from thence on a straight line to a tree of White Oak with the top broken off . . . which said tree stands by the Cartway just where an old footpath turned out of it toward Careswell and between the said ways and thence on a straight line to the South West side of Edward Bumpus' land so called, when he formerly lived at

## *Boundaries*

Duck Hill, taking in the said lands of the said Edward Bumpus to the township of Marshfield, and these bounds aforesaid to be the bounds betwixt the said townships of Duxburrow and Marshfield forevermore.

"In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands the three and twentieth day of February, 1683.

WILLIAM PEABODY—NATHANIEL THOMAS  
JOHN TRACIE—SAMUEL SPRAGUE."

In 1713, Pembroke was separated from Duxbury; and in 1813, boundaries between Duxbury and Marshfield were established—in spite of the decree of the four surveyors that their findings should remain as defined "forevermore."

In 1857, a part of Duxbury was annexed to Kingston.

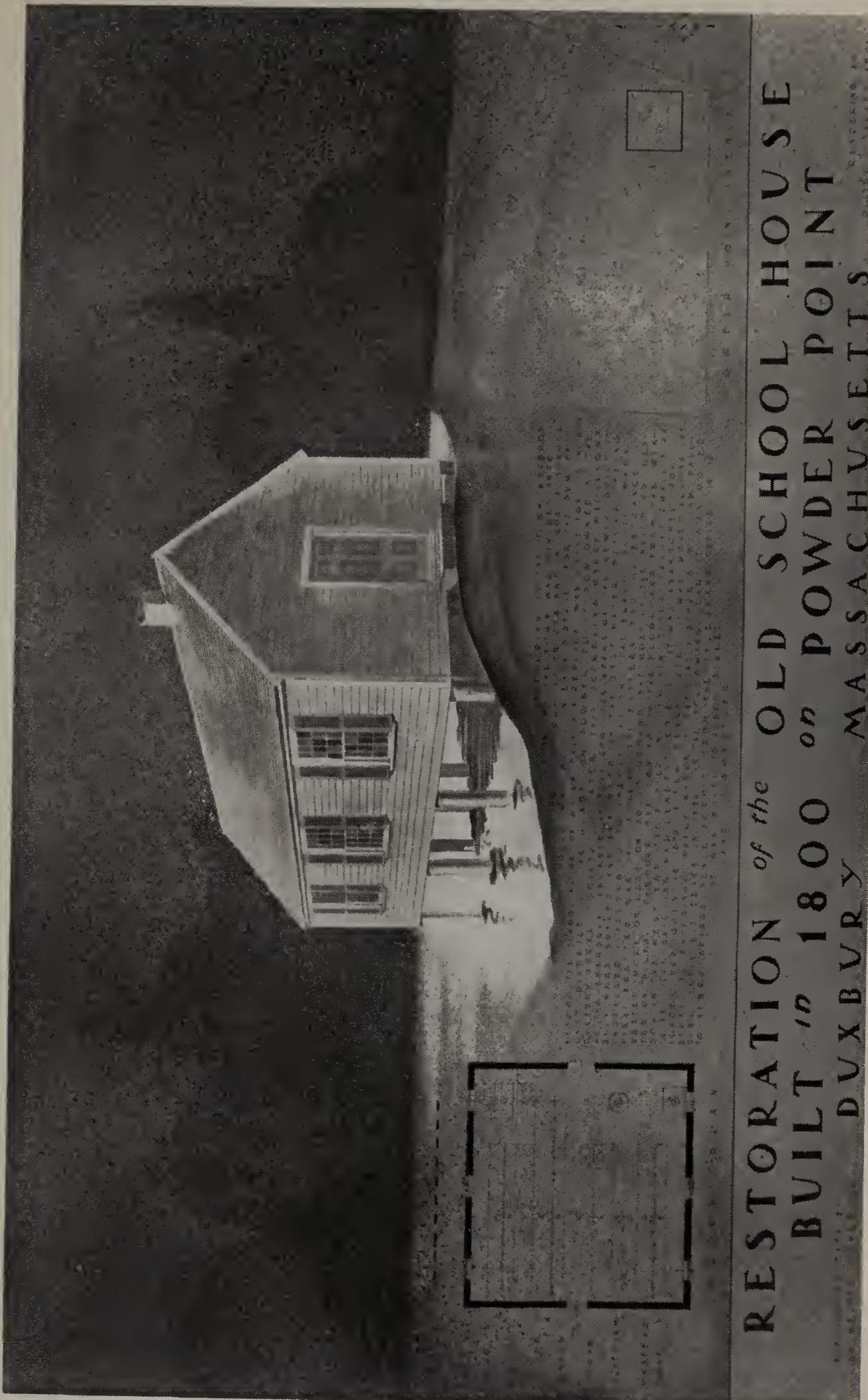
The vicinity of Duxbury, described by Governor William Bradford as "a whole countrie full of woods and thickets" meets with a happier characterization by the landscape architect, Franklin Brett, who painted the word picture of the Duxbury of today:

"Seashore with a beach hardly surpassed; most interesting salt marshes intersected with winding water courses tributary to a bay offering every advantage for boating and sailing; beautiful inland country, much of it well wooded and offering attractive sites for homes."



## **EDUCATION**





RESTORATION of the OLD SCHOOL HOUSE  
BUILT in 1800 on POWDER POINT  
DUXBURY MASSACHUSETTS

E. C. Turner, Photographer



## EDUCATION

“**N**ONE of the brethren shall suffer so much barbarism in their families as not to teach their children and apprentices so much learning as may enable them perfectly to read the English tongue.”

Thus decreed the Great and General Court of Massachusetts in 1642, just five years after Duxbury had become a separate town.

Popular interest had but recently been stirred by the founding of Harvard College, an event which made vivid the reality of the determination of the colonists to educate their children. The beginning of Duxbury as an independent town and the beginning of public education were practically concurrent. It was almost inevitable, therefore, that public education should become one of Duxbury’s earliest concerns.

The town was fortunate in having the advice of the venerated Elder Brewster, a graduate of Cambridge University, England. The full strength of his influence was directed toward the development of an educated, enlightened youth. It was but three years after his death that the General Court prescribed that the citizens of “every township after the Lord

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

hath increased them to the number of fifty households, shall appoint one to teach all children to read and write; and when any town shall increase to the number of 100 families, they shall set up a grammar school, the master thereof being able to instruct youth so far as they may be fitted for the university."

At first, most of the financial support of the schools came from the Cape Cod fishing industry, a fact which has been suggested as a possible origin of the adage, "Fish makes brains."

Many of its early teachers came to Duxbury from Harvard. From time to time, unable to obtain a teacher whom it deemed competent, the town paid fines to the colony and later to the state for its failure to keep its schools open. It was almost two hundred years before women were employed.

The early teachers were as poorly paid as the school buildings were inadequately equipped. Jonathan Peterson, for instance, received as his salary as schoolmaster for the year 1733 the munificent sum of forty-five pounds, one shilling and sixpence. But, with the gathering of experience in a hitherto unexplored field, these deficiencies were remedied. The history of education in Duxbury is a story of constant effort toward improvement.

To widen the opportunity for all children to obtain the benefits of schooling, the township was divided into quarters, and school sessions in rotation were held in each quarter. Any child was entitled to attend any session.

## *Education*

At first, general supervision of the schools was in the hands of the ministers. Then the selection of teachers was entrusted to three agents selected at town meeting. The school committee was first prescribed by state law in 1826.

Among the most interesting accounts of the work of the Duxbury schools of a century ago are the carefully worded reports of school committeeman Stephen N. Gifford. They indicate the earnestness with which officials of that period assumed their duties.

In recording a meeting attended by himself and his two fellow-members, Ralph Partridge and Seth Sprague, Mr. Gifford wrote, under date of May 5, 1844: ". . . we spent several hours in examining Miss W., and did not approbate her . . . Miss Hannah B. Guild was examined by Messrs. Partridge and Gifford, and approbated."

And an official committee visit was made to the school administered by "Miss Sterns, who appeared devoted to her work; communicates with great volubility. Had a free conversation with her after the school was dismissed. Assured her of our support and assistance."

Something of the severity of discipline used by certain of the teachers is indicated by a forthright protest written in Mr. Gifford's record in May, 1847. The committee visited the Tarkiln school and there found conditions "all right. The school was too still, we think. If anything is to be said against it, we believe that to keep children of such a tender

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

age sitting bolt upright for one hour and a half is, to say the least, a violation of the laws of nature and tends not only to enfeeble the body but also to produce a corresponding weakness of mind."

But that such discipline was by no means universal is proved by Mr. Gifford's tart comment on his visit to another district where he "found the school a perfect hurly burly. No order or wisdom. Stayed as long as we could under the circumstances and came away sick at heart."

Schoolhouses of the nineteenth century were usually difficult to heat during the winter weather. In the smaller schools, monitors appointed from the boy pupils, were charged with keeping the fires burning in the big wood stoves. On bitter days, the long benches were not infrequently arranged as closely as possible about the stove. But even that measure was not always successful in keeping the pupils warm. Stamping in unison was recognized as an orthodox method for periodically warming cold feet. The gusto with which the exercise was performed usually accomplished its purpose.

Attendance at school during the winter was, of course, dependent on the weather. Bobsleds and pungs frequently were pressed into service to carry the pupils to and from school. But there were numerous times when the drifting snow rendered the roads impassable.

Of the schools of one hundred years ago, one of the most interesting was that at Powder Point. It

## *Education*

had several claims to fame. Among these was the fact that it furnished the first example of student government in the United States. And evidence that it really was government by the students is the record of its meetings. On January 6, 1841, the Mattakeeset Republic, as the student government described itself, laid down a rule of conduct for Mr. Edmund Gifford, the teacher. "Voted," read the minutes, "that Mr. Gifford should not go beyond the sound of the bell."

That same meeting dealt with policies of study and prescribed for formal debate the question: "Ought our Pilgrim Fathers to be justified in their treatment of the Indians?" George Bradford and Roland C. Winslow were designated to speak in the affirmative, and George F. Nickerson and Reuben Peterson were to take the negative side.

"Mr. Gifford being sick," reads the entry of January 15, 1841, "John Bradford and Jonathan Smith kept school in the afternoon." That they were earnest in their efforts to improve themselves is shown by an entry calling for an extra session at night, "for the purpose of spelling and ciphering." Here, indeed, was student government.

Since the school was located within earshot of ship-building yards and in a town where lived sea captains who could speak with authority about the ports of the seven seas, it was natural that the students should find geography one of the most interesting subjects of study. And it is not surprising to discover that whenever a new ship was launched

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

from any of the neighboring yards, a school holiday was declared.

For a considerable time, sessions were held during the evening, so that daylight hours might be left free for farming and such other work as the pupils were accustomed to do.

The school had been built above a creek, on piles driven into the marsh; and this location gave to it an opportunity which is probably unique in educational institutions—the opportunity to fish through the holes in the classroom floor.

Erected in 1800, the little twenty-four by twenty-six school served a useful purpose for some seventy-five years.

In that same district, on land once held by the ship-builder, "King Caesar" Weston, and his family, Frederick B. Knapp, son of a Plymouth pastor, founded the "Powder Point School for Boys." Opened in 1886, the school offered a cultural and college preparatory course administered by a carefully selected corps of teachers. The school soon became widely known; and pupils were attracted from all parts of the United States.

Mr. Knapp insisted upon high standards of conduct as well as learning. He was determined that Powder Point should produce gentlemen who believed in moderation in all things. That insistence was carried even into athletic competitions.

During a baseball game in 1900, a student named Wendell Phillips found himself deeply outraged by decisions of the umpire.

## *Education*

"Rotten!" Phillips finally exploded. "Rotten! Rotten!"

"Master Phillips," came the irate protest from the principal on the sidelines, "couldn't you say *decayed?*"

In 1926, Powder Point School closed its doors as an educational institution. One of its buildings is now used as the National Home for Sailors.

Mr. Knapp's father, Rev. Frederick N. Knapp, was himself the director of a Plymouth school. Both father and son served terms as trustees of Duxbury's first school for secondary education, Partridge Academy.

Erected in 1843 in compliance with provisions of the will of George Partridge, military and civic leader and educator, Partridge Academy served Duxbury for almost eighty years.

George Partridge died in 1828. His will, made five years previous to his death, placed in trust the sum of ten thousand dollars and directed that when this amount had increased sufficiently to permit the erection and maintenance of a school, the trustees were to begin construction.

The will read, in part: "My desire and intention is to provide in my native town for a higher degree of instruction in the mathematics, geography, history, languages and other branches of good learning than the common schools supply, but not to provide a substitute for such schools so important to be constantly maintained. . . . In case of applications for admission into said school or academy

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

being at any time beyond the regulated number, the applicants from the town of Duxbury shall have priority . . . free of assessment or expense, excepting fuel and for books, paper and other materials necessary in their education, and not belonging to the institution."

The will named as trustees Rev. John Allyn of Duxbury, Rev. Zephaniah Willis of Kingston, Rev. James Kendall of Plymouth, Samuel A. Frazar of Duxbury and John Sever of Kingston. These men were directed to elect two more trustees when the building should be undertaken, and to fill all vacancies in their number caused by death or resignation.

In 1829, the Massachusetts legislature passed an "act to incorporate the trustees of Partridge Academy of Duxbury."

Before construction of the building had been begun, there were several changes among the trustees. The resignation of Dr. Allyn and Mr. Frazar resulted in the election of Rev. Josiah Moore, George P. Richardson and Gershom B. Weston. The membership was then brought to the prescribed number of seven by the election of Thomas Beals and Benjamin Alden.

These seven men selected as a site for the proposed academy a lot owned by William Freeman and immediately began construction of a building which was completed and equipped by December 16, 1844. The trustees engaged James Ritchie as principal. Fifty of eighty-two applicants were



*Center: Original home of Ezra Weston I, "King Caesar." Extreme left: Home of Ezra Weston II, "King Caesar II." Extreme right: Powder Point School. Foreground: Weston Wharf.*



## *Education*

accepted as students and the first classes were held in January, 1845.

Mr. Ritchie resigned as principal in 1849. The post was held next by William B. Edson, then successively by George Bradford, Ellis Peterson and William Wheeler of Boston. Mr. Edson and Mr. Peterson were Harvard graduates.

In 1856, Rev. Josiah Moore, one of the trustees, was elected principal, and Miss Julia Stetson his assistant. At the end of seven years, the efficient Miss Stetson resigned and was succeeded by her sister, Emma. When advancing years and failing health caused Mr. Moore to resign as principal in 1870 and to content himself with the less rigorous duties of trustee, he was succeeded by another Harvard graduate, Edmund Wright, who served until 1878. Mr. Wright's term was interrupted by illness, during which F. J. Worcester of Boston acted as principal.

During these early years of the academy's life, death and resignation caused numerous changes in the personnel of the board of trustees. Citizens who served terms on the board included Seth Sprague, Captain Daniel Winsor, Captain Briggs Thomas, Dr. James Wilde, John S. Loring, Hambleton E. Smith, Elbridge H. Chandler, Dr. John Porter, Captain Joseph Wadsworth and George W. Ford.

Rev. James Kendall, one of the original five trustees, resigned in 1854, at the conclusion of twenty years of service, and was promptly made honorary trustee. George P. Richardson gave the

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

academy twenty-nine years of service before resigning in 1862. Rev. Josiah Moore continued as a trustee until 1878, resigning then after forty years of constructive work. The long periods of service of the majority of the trustees was indicative of the devotion with which they undertook their duties.

The terms of the principals, however, continued to be brief. In 1878, Edmund Wright was succeeded by Rev. Edward B. Maglathlin who, in turn, was replaced in 1883 by Charles F. Jacobs. In order to study in Europe, Mr. Jacobs resigned in 1889. George R. Pinkham, who succeeded him as principal, withdrew at the end of two years. Thomas H. H. Knight then took over the post.

After having served as assistant for eleven years, Miss Emma Stetson resigned in 1886, while Mr. Jacobs was principal. She was succeeded by the principal's sister, Miss Stella C. Jacobs. From 1892 to 1903, the position was held by Miss Hannah Davis Symmes whose work and personality left a deep impression upon those with whom she came in contact.

Rev. Frederick N. Knapp had taken the trusteeship left vacant by Mr. Moore; and in 1886, he was joined on the board by his son, Frederick B. Knapp, founder of the Powder Point School. Later members of the board included John H. Parks, Horatio Adams and William J. Wright.

The academy was self-supporting until 1881. In that year, the town and the state each contributed \$150 to the maintenance of the school, and the

## *Education*

amount of the appropriation was increased gradually until 1903, when it was \$1000.

In conformity with state laws governing the disbursement of school funds, the courses of study at the academy were brought gradually under the direction of the school authorities of the town. The trustees and the school committee worked together.

In 1898 Principal Knight resigned to accept an appointment at the Boston English High School, and was succeeded by Herbert E. Walker, the present president of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society. Since Mr. Walker already had served for some years as a teacher in the academy, he was entirely familiar with its purposes and problems. He remained as principal thirteen years.

During his term, stenography, typewriting, drawing, and athletics were added to the academy program. After school hours, military drill was available to those who desired it.

The scope of the work of the academy at the beginning of the twentieth century is explained in the 1899 report of Principal Walker to the school committee.

"The lowest class," he wrote, "is called the grammar class, because the pupils take the work of the highest class of a grammar school in a well organized system of public schools. The second, third and fourth year classes are called respectively the junior, middle, and senior classes, the same names having been in use when the course in the academy was three years, instead of four as at present. The subjects

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studied in the junior, middle, and senior classes are those generally taken in the high schools of the state. Thus three years only are given to high school studies. Those who return for a fifth year are called ex-seniors. A considerable portion of each year's class remains for that fifth year. It seems desirable, therefore, that the course should include four years of high school studies."

This recommendation was put into effect. Within the academy building, a high school course of four years was arranged to supplement the classes already formed. This course was directly under the supervision of the public school authorities. The assistant principal of the academy was the principal of the high school.

The added classes necessitated also an increase in floor space—the first major alteration in the academy building since its opening, sixty-four years previous. Laboratories and classrooms were provided by the new construction.

In 1911, Herbert E. Walker resigned, the last principal to preside over Partridge Academy as it was originally conceived. His successor, Alton H. Hartford, who had been his assistant and had also been serving as principal of the high school, assumed the double role of principal of both schools. Then, in succession, Arthur J. Mott, Robert Cushman and George E. Green served in the same capacity.

In 1926, a complete reorganization of the school system and the construction of a new high school

*Duxbury High School. Erected in 1927*

*E. C. Turner, Photographer*





## *Education*

caused the abandonment of Partridge Academy. After a period during which it was owned by the town, the fine old building was destroyed by fire in 1933.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, smaller and less widely known private schools existed in the town. One of those best known was conducted on St. George Street by Miss Mary Rice, who later, as Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, wife of the pastor of the Universalist Church of Duxbury, achieved national fame as an editor and author. During the Civil War she served as a member of the Sanitary Commission. As editor of *Woman's Journal*, she shared with Julia Ward Howe and Lucy Stone the burden of pioneering in the unpopular cause of women's suffrage.

Other small private schools included those of Rev. John Allyn and Miss Mercy Delano, and later, the "Alden School for Girls" over which Miss Mary T. Jenkins and Miss Helen T. Nevers presided as principals.

Primary and grammar school work in Duxbury conformed closely to that pursued by most other towns in Massachusetts. District schools had been provided for by legislative decree in 1789. Twelve such ungraded schools were in use in Duxbury in 1869, when the legislature abolished the system.

In that year, a town meeting wrestled with the problem of reorganization of the school system in accordance with the new requirements. Six un-

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graded schools in the eastern part of the town were replaced by four schools for the lower grades and a grammar school for the intermediate grades. Four newly organized schools replaced the six ungraded ones of the western district. The buildings to be abandoned were sold at auction; and the money thus raised was used in improving the buildings designated for further occupancy.

Since the eastern portion of the town had an intermediate school, it was only natural that the western part should demand one also. Therefore, in March, 1871, the town agreed to the establishment of its second grammar school "not less than four months in any year when it shall appear that such a school will be attended by at least twenty scholars."

The town moved cautiously along a road which was still none too well known. Ungraded district schools in Duxbury did not disappear entirely until the reorganization of 1926.

To those familiar with the twentieth century emphasis upon the exercise of privilege and upon the demand for more and more privileges, it is of interest to note that in the nineteenth century, educators appeared equally determined to teach youth to assume the responsibilities of citizenship and to develop the qualities of character which had made the privileges possible.

According to the school records of 1871, it was the custom, in the grammar school in the eastern half of the town, for the teacher to begin the regu-

## *Education*

lar sessions by putting a question to a pupil. If the latter could make the correct answer, it was his duty to frame the next question and to designate the next student who was to answer. This student then continued in the same manner.

Any pupil of an advanced class was expected to be able to take charge of the teaching of a lower class. In event of the absence of the regular teacher, he must be competent to direct the work of his classmates during the recitation period.

From the time when the Mattakeeset Republic was founded in the little school at Powder Point, character-development held a leading place among the purposes of education in Duxbury.

In 1880, there were three hundred ninety pupils in the Duxbury schools. Town appropriations for schools at that period averaged from \$2900 to \$3500, of which some \$400 was from the dog tax and from money provided by the state for assisting in the support of local public schools.

Until 1884, parents had to supply their children with textbooks and whatever materials were required for their school work. The state law requiring the towns to provide all necessary books and supplies went into effect on August 1, 1884. Records of 1886 show that the books and other materials required for the schools in that year cost the town \$320.89—considerably less than one dollar per pupil.

It was during the same year that organizations opposed to the liquor trade succeeded in obtaining

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a statute requiring that children in the public schools be taught "effects of alcoholic drinks, stimulants and narcotics on the human system."

After some three years of discussion, the Duxbury school committee joined with those of Scituate and Marshfield to form a district to be under the direction of a superintendent. At a meeting held in April, 1889, with Col. H. A. Oakman of Marshfield as chairman, and C. F. Jacobs of Duxbury as secretary, Frank W. Sweet of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was selected as the first union superintendent in this part of the country. Mr. Sweet began his new duties on May 15, 1889, served but a few months and moved on to take a similar position in Bridgewater.

He was succeeded by a Dartmouth graduate, Edwin H. Watson, superintendent of schools at Beaver, Pennsylvania. Mr. Watson began at once reconstructing the course of study and the grading of the schools.

He inaugurated conventions of the teachers of the district, urged consolidation of schools and recommended that teachers be relieved of teaching more than one or two grades. During this period, business opportunities were so attractive that there arose popular demand for commercial instruction in the public schools.

In 1893, the promoters of the World's Columbian Exposition, America's first "world's fair," succeeded in interesting Massachusetts schools in sending samples of their work. Duxbury took pride in its

## *Education*

exhibit of nature study and in the "diploma" awarded by exposition officials.

The school committee report of 1894 indicates that the attractions of the Marshfield Fair must have been great: when the autumn opening of the schools was postponed two weeks to conform to the closing of the fair, an immediate improvement in attendance was noted. The postponement also reduced the number of absences which had been caused by the necessity of helping to harvest the cranberry crop.

After a period of almost a year, during which Duxbury had no superintendent of schools, Dr. Edgar L. Willard, a Brown graduate, assumed the position in June, 1896. Withdrawal of Scituate from the district had caused the resignation of Mr. Watson.

In the meantime, Nathan T. Soule, who had returned to Duxbury at the conclusion of more than twenty-five years of teaching in various New England towns, had been persuaded to take charge of the new grammar school in Duxbury Hall building. It was the purpose of this new school to prepare pupils for Partridge Academy.

At the turn of the century, a report by Dr. Willard indicated a change in educational viewpoint. He wrote: ". . . the old idea . . . that the teaching of history was concerned only with the rehearsal of incidents of war and other national and international difficulties has been partially supplanted by a more rational idea—that school history should

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deal largely with the growth of social, civil, and religious institutions." This idea, he concluded, characterized the new teaching of history in Duxbury.

Dr. John E. DeMayer served as superintendent from 1907 to 1909. He was succeeded by William E. Chaffin, who was superintendent until 1918 when the World War was entering its final phase. In September of that year, Frederick E. Bragdon began his term as superintendent.

In 1915, during Mr. Chaffin's term of office, the Duxbury High School succeeded in winning for its graduates admission to the state normal schools without examination. In the same year the formation of the Parent Teachers Association gave immediate impetus to the spread of knowledge of school problems and purposes.

It was in 1918 that the teachers of the town banded together in the Duxbury Teachers' Club.

The World War was forcing changes in every phase of American life. In accordance with requests of the War Commission, none but indispensable repairs were made in school buildings; improvements were postponed indefinitely. All but vital services were curtailed or discontinued altogether. Talk of consolidation of schools for the sake of economy, regardless of educational need, was persistent. The teaching of patriotism was demanded, though there were vigorous differences of opinion as to the precise definition of patriotism.

The discovery that a high percentage of American young men between twenty-one and thirty-one

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years of age had been found physically unfit for military service shocked a smug public.

"The revelations of the draft," reported Superintendent Bragdon, "are humiliating to American pride and make imperative the need for a more efficient physical training in public schools."

The agitation for physical training continued. In 1919, in describing the results of the military draft in the South Shore district of which Duxbury formed a part, Dr. N. K. Noyes, the school physician, said that of eight hundred men examined, six hundred fifty were rejected as physically unfit, and only one hundred fifty accepted as fit for service.

It required such an upheaval as a World War to arouse popular realization of the need for preventive and corrective work among school children to improve the physical and mental health of the nation. In Duxbury, a school nurse was engaged. The Parent Teachers Association began agitation for a school dentist. Physical education was not adopted as part of the school curriculum until 1936.

During the years immediately following the war, there were no significant changes in the school system. The Partridge Academy was still functioning.

On March 6, 1926, the town appropriated \$130,000 for the purchase of a site on Alden Street and construction of a new high school there. A building committee consisting of J. Dexter Randall, Benjamin F. Goodrich, Percy L. Walker, Theodore W. Glover, Jr., and John Simmons was selected to

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arrange for the purchase of the land and the erection of the building.

The first school activity in the new building was the graduation ceremony of the class of 1927, on June 14, 1927.

When the new school was opened for classes in the autumn of that year, new courses were added—compulsory manual training for boys of the seventh grade and domestic arts for the girls. Classes in Partridge Academy were discontinued.

In designing the new building, recognition was given to the increasing demands for extracurricular activities. A gymnasium-auditorium was included for athletic, social, and educational gatherings. Parking space near the school, designed primarily to care for the automobiles in which teachers and many of the pupils go to and from school, was equipped with flood lights; the designers apparently foresaw extensive use of the gymnasium-auditorium at night.

In the meantime, interest in extracurricular activities had been growing. The first issue of *The Partridge*, the high school paper, had been published in November, 1923. Dorothy Walker was the first editor; Miss Helen McKay, teacher of English, was the faculty adviser. In the same year, the first annual award of the Franklin and Washington medal, donated by the Massachusetts Sons of the American Revolution for excellence in United States history, was made to Robert J. N. Osborn, valedictorian of the class of 1923.

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Organized athletics for both boys and girls had long since been provided. A school orchestra was formed in 1927. To a certain extent, such extra-curricular matters helped to widen the popular interest in the school.

In 1926, Superintendent Bragdon resigned. John H. Parker of Kingston served from April, 1926, to July, 1927. The town at that time withdrew from its union with Marshfield and Scituate and began to function as a separate school unit. In the same year, the principal of the high school, George E. Green, assumed the position of superintendent of schools.

In 1937, Duxbury public schools have an enrollment of three hundred ninety-eight pupils, of whom one hundred attend the high school. The town appropriation for schools for this year is \$46,000, in addition to the dog tax and the usual state allotment. Of this, \$1000 has been set aside for books and supplies—approximately \$2.50 per pupil. It is interesting to compare these figures with those of the 'seventies.

In this motor age, distance has been rendered comparatively unimportant in education. Duxbury children are carried in a few minutes over distances which would have been considered almost prohibitive a decade ago. Modern road machinery has reduced to a minimum the necessity for suspending school sessions in winter.

It is now possible to carry pupils to a school equipped with the best available facilities, where

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they may be taught by well paid, well trained teachers. It is no longer necessary to take the schools to the children and to be content with inferior equipment and underpaid instructors.

If a boy of 1937 could escort a boy of 1837 through the present high school building with its gymnasium, laboratories, central heating plant, and facilities for motion picture and radio presentation of subjects of interest, he could show him much that was undreamed of a hundred years ago.

But the boy of 1837 still would be able to point out one advantage which he enjoyed in his little school over the creek at Powder Point, a feature for which engineers, architects and educators neglected to provide when they planned the building of today—the chance to fish through the floor.

## CHURCHES AND CEMETERIES





*First Parish Church (1840). Town Offices.*

*Partridge Academy (1844)*

*Duxbury Civic Center. Buildings erected about 1840.*



## THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL PARISH (UNITARIAN)

By Elizabeth S. Peterson

**I**N the summer of 1632 was "gathered" the first church of Duxbury, a scion of the Plymouth church, and the second to be established in the Old Colony.

Probably before 1630, the colonists had cleared the fertile land north of Plymouth Harbor and had built there shelters for themselves and their cattle. On Sunday, it was their custom to return with their families for worship in the main settlement; and here, for better protection against the Indians, they remained during the winter months.

In 1632, according to the records of Governor Bradford, "those that dwelt on the other side of the bay (called Duxberie), they could not long bring their wives and children to the public worship and church meetings here, but with such burthen, as grown to a competente number, they sued to be dismiste and become a body of themselves, and so they were dismiste (about this time) though very unwillingly."

A visitor to the church in the year 1632 would

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have found his way to a small structure near the homes of the settlers in the southeast portion of the township and in sight of the bay. He would have been greeted by the ruling elder, William Brewster, in his gown and bands, as he, a layman, presided over the church in place of an ordained minister. Captain Standish and Barbara, his wife, John Alden and Priscilla, Jonathan Brewster, Henry Sampson and young Philip De La Noye, would have welcomed him to simple homes on the peninsula within the bay toward Plymouth, or a little farther inland by Eagle-tree Pond and a small tidal river.

In 1637, the year of the incorporation of the Town, which is five years younger than the Church, Rev. Ralph Partridge was installed as minister. He was a graduate of Cambridge University, a "gracious man of great abilities," formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, who had been driven from his pulpit by Archbishop Laud. Mr. Partridge served until his death in 1658, "much honored and loved by all who conversed with him and faithful to his charge, notwithstanding the paucity and poverty of his Flock."<sup>1</sup>

In 1647, there were eight churches in the Plymouth Colony and twenty-four in Massachusetts Bay, which sent delegates to the Cambridge synod. Mr. Partridge was the delegate of the Old Colony. John Cotton, Richard Mather and Mr. Partridge were each requested to draw up a "model of church

<sup>1</sup> Winsor, p. 137.

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government according to the will of God”<sup>2</sup> to aid the synod in formulating an acceptable plan.

Duxbury, therefore, had a share in the writing of the “Cambridge platform.”

Upon his death, Mr. Partridge was succeeded by Rev. John Holmes (1658–1675), “a godly man . . . efficacious in the great and honorable work of preaching the gospel.”

From 1676 to 1700, Rev. Ichabod Wiswall directed the affairs of the parish, assisted by Deacon John Wadsworth, whose descendants for at least four generations held the same office. Mr. Wiswall was sent to England in 1691 as a delegate to oppose the annexation of Plymouth to Massachusetts Bay. Increase Mather, delegate of the victorious Massachusetts Bay, bitterly taunted Mr. Wiswall with his defeat and referred to him as “the little weasel.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition to his duties as minister, Mr. Wiswall found time for the study of astrology, and wrote a poem on the comet of 1680. He died in 1700, much lamented by his people, and was buried in the old cemetery where his gravestone may be seen.

At a town meeting on April 3, 1706, it was voted to build “a new meeting house 40 feet long and 33 feet wide and 17 feet high in the walls . . . within 3 or 4 rods of the old meeting house now in being.” At a cost of one hundred eighty pounds, Seth Sprague completed the building early in 1707. It

<sup>2</sup> Winsor, p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

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was located a little to the east of the old cemetery.

The ministries of Rev. John Robinson (1702-1738) and Rev. Samuel Veazie (1738-1750) were turbulent and unhappy. The community was without ready money; yet the ministers felt the necessity of "living in the body." During this time, the colony was annoyed by the persistent visitations of Quakers whom they resisted and persecuted.

During the pastorate of Mr. Veazie came the Great Revival. When Plymouth was visited by Whitefield, controversy arose between the Old Lights and the New. Although Mr. Veazie embraced the tenets of Whitefield, the majority of his congregation, led by Captain Samuel Alden, remained true to the Old Light. In 1750 Mr. Veazie was granted a dismission.

The pastorate of Rev. Charles Turner, begun in 1755, was a contrastingly happy one and was productive of great good to the town. Illness caused the retirement of Mr. Turner at the conclusion of twenty years of service. Thereafter, he was a delegate to the convention which debated the acceptance of the Federal Constitution and to the convention which drew up the State constitution. For several years he was a State senator.

Rev. Zedekiah Sanger of the class of 1771 of Harvard College was ordained one day before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and preached his first sermon on the text, "Ye shall proclaim liberty throughout the land and unto the inhabitants thereof."

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During the pastorate of Mr. Sanger, the third meeting-house was erected on the site of the present structure, nearer to the geographical center of the town. It was under construction for more than three years and was, according to town records, completed in 1787. A painting of it may be seen in the vestibule of the present church, together with the plan of seating, one of the pew doors and the bell-yoke of this or possibly an earlier church.

In 1788, Mr. Sanger was succeeded by perhaps the most notable of Duxbury ministers, Rev. John Allyn, whose term of service extended to 1833, a period of forty-five years. As a preacher, he was, for his time, singularly free from dogma, "caring little for the trappings of religion, but much for its essence." His methods of expounding Scripture and teaching ethics were all his own. His conversation was frank, his wit pungent, and his common sense strong.

As was usual in his time, Dr. Allyn combined the duties of preacher and teacher, and prepared youth for Harvard College and other institutions of learning. He accepted girls, as well as boys, as pupils. In his methods, he was more advanced than many teachers of that day; he sought to create in his students a desire to explore for themselves the subjects set before them. In good weather, he held classes under the trees in his orchard. Seated in his armchair, he had his pupils grouped about him.

The influence of Dr. Allyn's force and individuality has been felt in the community for more than

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one hundred years. His home, one of the dignified, square white houses of Duxbury, stands near the corner of Alden and Tremont streets, next door to the home of Major Judah Alden, whose little daughter, Mary Ann, he instructed in Latin for one dollar a week.

By gradual process of thought, and without schism or controversy, the Duxbury parish became Unitarian early in the nineteenth century. In 1828 occurred its separation from the town.

In requesting the civil authorities to call the meeting of March 3, 1828, the petitioners stated that "precinct meetings have not been held for many years for the proper management of parochial affairs . . . but the same were transacted by and in the name of the Town of Duxbury. . . . By the establishment of other Societies of Christians in said town, they are unable to manage their parochial affairs as heretofore they have done." Therefore, all persons qualified to vote on parish matters were summoned to elect new parish officers.

The petitioners, twenty in number, were headed by Gershom B. Weston and G. P. Richardson. At the meeting, Benjamin Alden, Jr., presided as moderator, Silvanus Smith was selected as clerk and Gershom Bradford as treasurer. Three assessors, a collector, a tithing man and a parish committee were elected, and plans for a tax levy were made.

From 1834 to 1881 occurred the longest pastorate, that of Rev. Josiah Moore, for many years

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principal of Partridge Academy, as well as minister.

It was during Mr. Moore's incumbency that the present church was erected, the fourth to house the activities of the parish. Though a useful structure, the third building had been torn down, partly because it had not been large enough to accommodate the congregation, and partly because it had not been imposing enough to satisfy some of the parishioners whom ship-building had made wealthy.

Among these was Ezra Weston, the second "King Caesar." The clock now under the gallery of the present church, brought there from the third church where it had first hung, was one of his gifts to the parish.

The size of the congregation was indicated by the number of votes cast at the parish meeting of November 25, 1839. The question was whether the new church should be near the old structure or on a new site nearer the main street. Ninety-two favored the old site; twenty-two the proposed new location. The parish members were all men. The new meeting-house, designed to seat a congregation of one thousand, was dedicated on October 28, 1840.

The church records for April 10, 1841, read: "Resolved that the thanks of the Parish be presented to Gershom Bradford, Esq. and the Rev. Josiah Moore for the manifestations of their deep Interest in Prosperity, Welfare, and Happiness of the Parish and in the advancement of the Christian

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religion in their liberal gifts to the Parish, the former a pair of tablets, and the latter a set of lamps to light the meeting-house. While their gifts remain an ornament to the Temple Dedicated to God, may they remind us and succeeding Generations that lives of Holiness, Truth and Justice are only acceptable to Him."

Though the lamps have been superseded by modern electric lighting, the tablets remain, with their profusion of oddly assorted Biblical texts.

During their later years, Dr. Allyn and Mr. Moore were assisted by associate ministers. Rev. Benjamin Kent (1826–1833), assistant to Dr. Allyn, became an authority on Duxbury history and genealogy. Rev. Frederick N. Knapp (1876–1882) was the associate of Mr. Moore.

Subsequent pastorates were held by Rev. Rushton Dashwood Burr (1882–1887), Rev. William H. Branigan (1887–1893), Dr. Walter R. Hunt (1894–1896), now secretary of the American Unitarian Association, Rev. Watson Weed (1897–1900), and Rev. Frederic W. Smith (1900–1904) who was ordained in this church. In 1903, during the pastorate of Mr. Smith, the Misses Lucy and Jerusha Hathaway presented the church with the building now in use as a parish house.

The longest of recent terms of service was that of Rev. Andrew Hahn, from 1905 to 1918. Then followed Rev. Ralph Holbrooke Cheever (1918–1922), Rev. John Henry Wilson (1924–1927), Rev. Dudley R. Child (1927–1933), and Rev. Frederic

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M. Tileston (1933–1936). The present minister, Rev. Carl B. Bihldorff, a graduate of Yale Theological School, was ordained here in November, 1936.

The Young People's Religious Union in Duxbury was organized by Mr. Wilson. Mr. Hahn was the minister when the Duxbury Branch of the General Alliance was formed in November, 1906, from the Sewing Circle of earlier days. The local philanthropies of this group have been considerable and its gifts to the church generous.

Since 1925, the parish has held annually in August a service of commemoration known as "Ancestors' Sunday." On that day, it is the custom for descendants of early pewholders to sit in the seats once occupied by their kindred, and later to meet informally on the church lawn. The officiating clergyman frequently has been a guest-preacher. Several times, Dr. Abbot Peterson of Duxbury and Brookline has given the commemoration address.

For some years, the men of the parish secured well known guest-preachers for the summer months, among them, Dr. William L. Sullivan, Dr. Preston Bradley and Dr. Samuel M. Crothers.

Beginning with the Partridge Ministerial Fund, established by George Partridge in 1829, the parish has been the beneficiary of generous bequests by its members, including the Misses Hathaway, Miss Margie S. Sampson, Miss Florence G. Ford and Mrs. George B. Frazar.

The church silver, now in the custody of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, includes three communion

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cups given the parish by James Partridge in 1731.

On August 14, 1932, the First Church in Duxbury celebrated its three hundredth anniversary. Since for two hundred years the town and the church were one, the ministers of the other two churches in the village took part in the service. Herbert E. Walker extended the greetings of the parish. Rev. Alfred R. Hussey of the parent church in Plymouth offered prayer and Professor Harold E. B. Speight of Dartmouth College gave the principal address.

Following the service, several former ministers joined in greeting friends at the reception held in the town hall and on the church lawn. Nine hundred people came to commemorate the founders and to recall the later men and women who had labored and sacrificed and rejoiced in the perpetuation of this church.

To those who are now the First Parish in Duxbury, the presence of this great congregation was memorable. It was a challenge to prove their worth as trustees of a goodly heritage.

## THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

By Elizabeth S. Peterson

IT has not been easy to secure data relative to this church which stood on the main village street in the southeast corner of what is now the Winsor House lot. The executive offices of the Universalist Church in Boston have no record of a church in Duxbury.

Deeds of the Winsor family show that the church was erected in 1826, demolished in 1866, and the lumber apparently carried to South Scituate by its purchaser, David Torrey, of that town.

In the records of the First Parish, we note that the Parish meeting of April 11, 1840, was held in the Universalist church. The present Unitarian meetinghouse was under construction at that time.

On Christmas night, 1843, Miss Mary A. Rice, who was teaching a private school in Duxbury, attended in the Universalist church her first Christmas service. In her autobiography, she wrote that this church made a larger use of Christmas than did the other Duxbury parishes, Unitarian and Methodist; that "on Christmas Eve, their children were treated to a small feast and a bountiful supply of

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presents. On Christmas night, a joyful religious service was held in the church, which was decorated and illuminated most brilliantly." After her first Christmas service, Miss Rice greeted the young minister, Rev. Daniel Parker Livermore, whose discourse had greatly impressed her. In 1845, she became his wife. Mrs. Livermore's association with Duxbury is one of its happy memories.

## THE PILGRIM CHURCH

By Rev. Gordon L. King

THE first church in Duxbury was Congregational, or as it was then called, "Independent." When the residents of this part of the Colony found it difficult to transport their increasing families to Plymouth for Divine Service, Elder Brewster gathered them into a church of which he was the leader. They worshipped in a building which stood within the enclosure of the Standish Cemetery.

Some time after 1800, this church became Unitarian. Those who did not favor this transfer of ecclesiastical polity formed a Methodist Episcopal Church in 1821. A small building was erected on the site of the present Episcopal Church. The society grew and flourished, for this was the era of ship-building in Duxbury.

Differences of opinion concerning slavery became so sharp that even Christian brethren found it impossible to dwell in unity.

Under the leadership of Seth Sprague, affectionately known to his friends as "Father Sprague," most of the members of this society withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, because, in their

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minds, it condoned slavery by refusing to condemn it. As Abolitionists, they could no longer lend their influence to an institution which had not taken a forthright stand for emancipation. Fifty-nine members withdrew with the intention of forming another "Independent" church in Duxbury.

In a letter addressed to the church, Mr. Sprague explained his withdrawal from its communion. "When I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church," he wrote, "I thought that the churches of that order were Anti-Slavery and Temperance Societies. By degrees, the sin of slavery crept into the church and when an attempt was made by a few of its members to expel this enormous sin, all the official influence of the Church was arrayed against them, and for eight years past it has been persecuting Abolitionists and defending Slavery. I consider the Methodist Episcopal Church as one great prop in the support of slavery and feel that so long as I remain a member of it, I am giving my support to that."

Thus was begun a new chapter in the history of this band of worshippers when, on Sunday afternoon, December 24, 1843, in the schoolroom of District No. 1 (which, according to one authority, stood on the northeast corner of the lot now occupied by the Pilgrim Church, and according to another, on Surplus Street), they met for re-organization. Here they worshipped until the present building was erected in 1844 on land given by Mr. Sprague, who also contributed several thousand dollars.

For some unexplained reason, the original in-

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tention of organizing an "Independent" church did not materialize. Instead, a "Wesleyan Methodist" church was formed, and until 1870, was affiliated with that Conference.

Since the only hall in town, the property of the Masons, was not available for rental, the vestry of the Pilgrim Church was used for varied purposes. In it were held singing schools, lectures, and entertainments; even traveling showmen staged their performances here.

The first regularly called pastor of the church was a Rev. Mr. Latham. In 1870, under Rev. J. W. Haley, it was voted to transfer from the Wesleyan Methodist to the Congregational Conference. Thus, by the re-establishment of a Congregational Church, was completed a cycle of change in ecclesiastical polity which finally brought this group back to the faith of their Pilgrim Fathers.

The church became known as the Wesleyan Congregational Church of Duxbury. At a Council meeting held on September 7, 1870, the church was formally received into the fellowship of the Congregational Churches of New England. Its present name, Pilgrim Church, was not adopted until 1873.

Three years previous, the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock had been commemorated. The idea then arose in the minds of the members of this church that the term, "Pilgrim," was a more fitting designation for their church than was the term, "Wesleyan."

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During the pastorate of Rev. W. W. Lyle, the change of name was made by adoption of the following resolution:

"... As the name of the Church was left for further consideration since the time when we became a Congregational Church, and as the year in which this change was made was the Memorial Year, or 250th Anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, and whereas the Sacred Edifice in which we worship stands on soil first trodden by the feet of the Pilgrim Fathers and consecrated by their enduring faith and holy ardor and heroic devotion, therefore—Resolved that this Church be hereafter known as the Pilgrim Church of Duxbury."

This church has championed the causes of temperance and church unity. For many years it had an active W.C.T.U. which did good work in educating the people to the importance of reform. In reference to church unity, a resolution was passed in 1907, putting the church on record as "favoring the union of the Methodist Protestant, Congregational and United Brethren churches under the name of the United Churches." This is an ideal not yet attained on the denominational scale. The Pilgrim Church co-operated with the First Parish Church in holding joint worship services during the winter of 1928 and 1929.

The church was incorporated in 1891. Inasmuch as the church had been accepted by the Congregational Conference, it was desired to incorporate it under the name of the Pilgrim Congregational Church in Duxbury. But because the First Parish

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Church in its incorporation had used the term, "Congregational," it had to be struck out of the name of this organization.

The records disclose the interesting fact that the church once requested the town to provide an officer of the law to keep order within and without the church during services. It is recorded that on another occasion, the pastor relinquished to a deacon the chair of moderator in order that he might take the floor to discuss "the faults of the people and his own, looking towards a better understanding between each other."

For some time, the church has maintained an active young people's society, which for many years functioned as a Christian Endeavor organization. Mrs. Sarah Sweetser was the first president. A few years ago, the young people formed an independent organization, the Pilgrim League; and for the past year and a half they have been active as the Pilgrim Chapter of Comrades of the Way.

The Sunday School has also been a vital part of the church life. The roster of pupils shows the names of more adults than minors. For many years, Mr. Allen Prior was the superintendent. The largest number of pupils enrolled at any one time was one hundred eighty.

No record of this church would be complete without reference to the work of the women's society known as the Home Workers. Their annual fairs, monthly suppers, weekly sewings and other activities have contributed much to the financial welfare

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and social life of the church. Perhaps the largest single task undertaken by the group was the remodeling of the parsonage at a cost of several thousand dollars.

For many years, most of the financial support of the church was derived from pew rentals. Not long after the organization of the church, this practice was stopped for a year; but during this period, the income dropped to such an extent that the renting of the pews was resumed. The plan was permanently abandoned some years ago.

The records show a bequest of five hundred dollars left for the Trustees to loan. The first loan was made to the Town of Duxbury at seven per cent interest. Thereafter, the money was loaned to various individuals, and on one occasion to the pastor.

The tower clock on the church was given in memory of Mrs. Almeda Ellison by her children and grandchildren. The names of William and Almeda Ellison are prominent in the earliest records of the church. In fact, the first records of the secretary are in the handwriting of Mr. Ellison. In subsequent years, Mrs. Ellison also acted as secretary.

With few exceptions, the pastors of the church seem to have been beloved. In one instance, a pastor who had spent a long and successful ministry here, was twice invited to resume the pastorate of Pilgrim Church. This was Rev. W. W. Lyle.

The pastor best known to the present generation was Rev. Lewis J. Thomas, who for thirteen

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years held the pastorate, and who as a resident layman for almost a decade before that, had labored in the interests of the church.

The present minister is Rev. Gordon L. King. Other officers of the church are:

*Clerk, MRS. LILA SHAW*

*Treasurer, HARRY L. TINKER*

*Deacons, WILLIAM H. HOLWAY and JOSEPH T. C. JONES*

*President of the Home Workers, MRS. ARTHUR W. WRIGHT*

*Superintendent of the Church School, MRS. GORDON L. KING*

*Executive officers of the Comrades of the Way, JOHN MERRY  
and ALMA NICKERSON*

During its ninety-four years of existence, about four hundred persons have entered the membership of the church. Though it has been aided in the past by Home Missionary funds, it has more recently been self-supporting.

With a heritage that reaches back to the *Mayflower*, the Pilgrim Church in Duxbury, through all her vicissitudes, has sought to perpetuate the Pilgrim Spirit.

Three hundred years from now, circumstances will no doubt have changed as much as they have changed during the past three centuries. But we feel certain that the Pilgrim devotion to the ideals of a democratic religion, of freedom to worship God, will live on undimmed, and that in Duxbury there will always be those who wish to worship in that spirit.

## THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

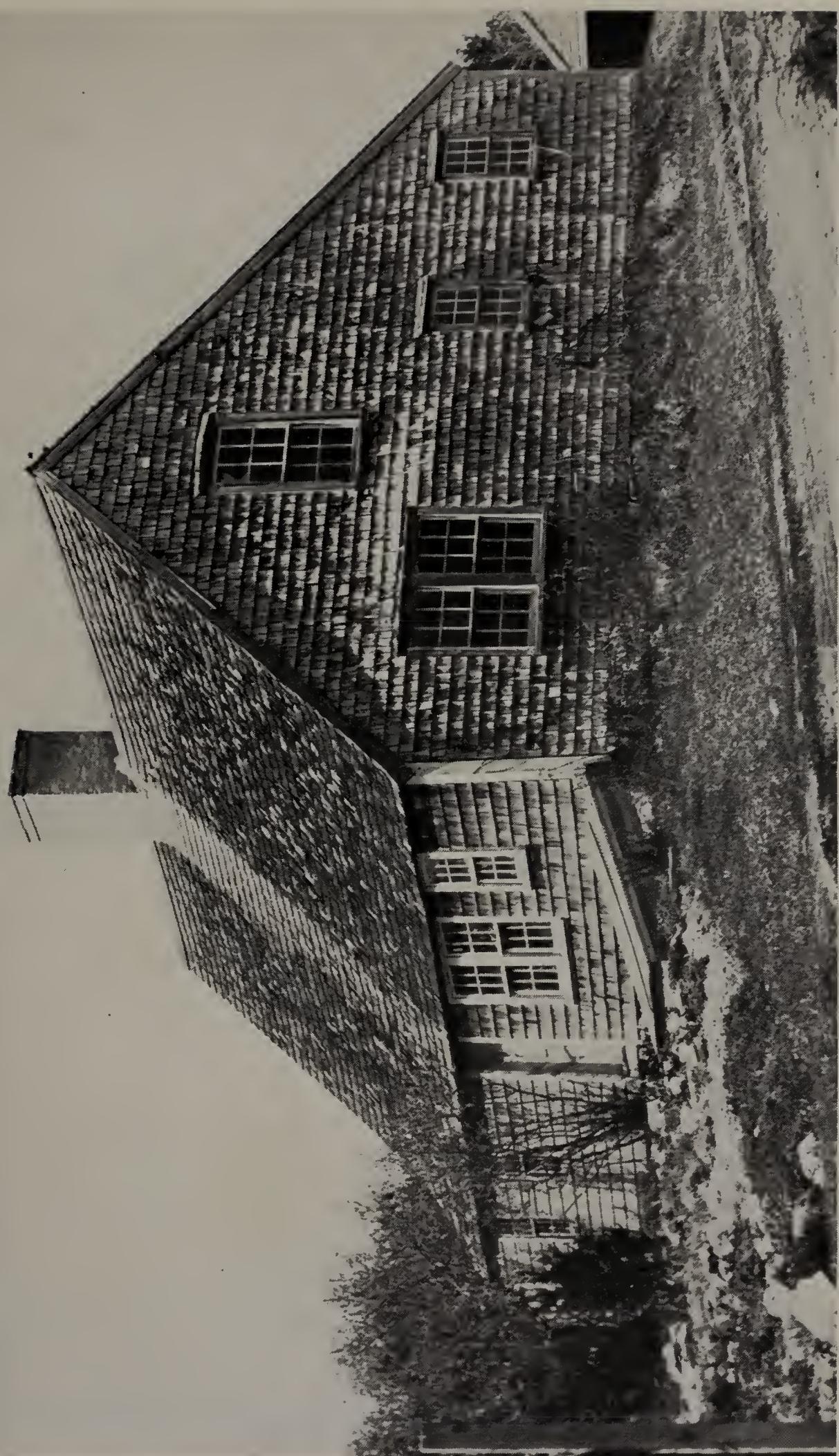
By Rev. Allen Jacobs

*Much of this historical sketch has been taken from an excellent account of St. John's Parish written by Mary Etheridge (Mrs. Henry H.) Warden.*

**I**N speaking of the life and growth of St. John's Church, one must not fail to mention the devoted interest of Miss Lucy Sprague Sampson, through whose untiring energy the beginning was made, and whose interest never failed while she had health and strength. For years she was called "our little bishop."

The first services were held in a hall. Next, a small school-house, bought and furnished in 1884, was used for about sixteen years. In memory of her mother, Sarah Sprague Sampson, Miss Sampson in 1895 bought the old Methodist meeting-house which her grandfather, Seth Sprague, had helped to pay for, and which stood on a site that he had donated.

On July 18, 1895, on the occasion of the first visit to St. John's by Archdeacon Edmund Roumani  re, Miss Sampson formally presented the building at a parish meeting in the Free Library.



E. C. Turner, Photographer

Hunt House (Built 1640)



## *Churches and Cemeteries*

After adaptations in design had been made by Ernest Machado, a Salem architect, the building was consecrated by Bishop William Lawrence.

An upstairs room in the church has been fitted as a chapel to be used for services in the winter months. Its comfort and completeness we owe to Mrs. Warren G. Bigelow. Recently, Mrs. Sydney Harwood gave all the cushions for the pews, and Mrs. Marion Speare gave one thousand dollars to paint the church and put the grounds in order.

Two of the most helpful workers in early years, who maintained a constant interest in the parish, were the Misses Hannah and Adeline M. Train (Mrs. Charles Weld and Mrs. Horace H. Soule).

A branch of the Women's Auxiliary, formed in 1884, has done consistent, good work.

In 1899, the building known as Sprague Hall was given to St. John's Parish in memory of Seth Sprague and his son, Peleg Sprague. With improvements made subsequently, the building has been of great usefulness.

St. John's was and is a mission. For some years, an allowance of fifty dollars a year was given by Englishmen of the French cable staff. The Diocese and the offerings of the congregation helped in the support of the church. Here Miss Sampson's aid was never-failing.

A Junior Guild, formed in 1936, is very active. A Young People's Fellowship has been formed, from which membership comes to the church.

Bishops of the Diocese who have visited St.

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John's include the Rt. Revs. Benjamin Paddock, Phillips Brooks, William Lawrence, Henry Knox Sherrill and Suffragan Bishop Samuel Babcock. Bishop A. A. C. Hall and Bishop Brent were much interested, and came often before they were made bishops.

Ministers in charge of St. John's have been Rev. Gustavus Tuckerman (1886-1888), Rev. Frederick H. Rowse (1888-1890), Rev. E. J. V. Huiginn (1890-1892), Rev. G. Sherman Richards (1892-1894), Rev. Ernest Pressey (1894-1896), Rev. Edward Borncamp (1896-1898), Rev. Thatcher R. Kimball (1898-1906), Rev. Samuel A. B. Mercer (1906-1908), Rev. Charles Mockridge (1908-1910), Rev. Frederick B. Bartlett (1910-1911), Rev. Theodore D. Martin (1911-1912), Rev. Herbert N. Cunningham (1912-1916), Rev. G. H. Kaltenbach (1916-1918), Rev. Reginald H. Coe (1918-1930). Rev. Allen Jacobs has been the pastor since 1930.

Of these, Mr. Huiginn is especially remembered in the town for his research in connection with the discovery of the grave of Myles Standish; Mr. Borncamp and Mr. Kimball for their interest in young people and the organization of a successful Boys' Club. Rev. Herbert N. Cunningham, who became strongly identified with civic as well as church life in Duxbury, has been greatly missed in the community.

St. John's looks forward to greater usefulness to its parish and to the town.

## THE WEST DUXBURY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By Rev. Tharold C. Northup

**I**N the year 1829, the inhabitants of West Duxbury and Ashdod were introduced to Methodist preaching. For the next three years, the coming of the Itinerant Methodist Preachers was looked forward to with much interest by a number of the residents of that locality.

In 1832, the newly organized Methodist Society erected and dedicated a meeting-house at Ashdod. About 1842, some members of the new society were attracted to the Wesleyan Church in Marshfield; but the early dissolution of this church left the field to the Methodist Society at Ashdod. For thirty years the little group struggled through the usual difficulties faced by a growing church.

In 1867, the time of the Civil War Reconstruction, it was found that the community enterprises had shifted their locations; that the religious center of the western part of the town, along with financial and industrial centers, had moved from Ashdod to West Duxbury proper. It was decided

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that the church should be moved to this new center of activity.

In spite of some opposition, the cornerstone of the existing church was laid on the new site at the corner of Taylor and High Streets in 1868. The sum of seven thousand dollars was expended for materials and construction. On June 11, 1869, in the presence of eleven other clergymen and a large congregation, Rev. Samuel F. Upham dedicated the new building to the service of God, "for the saving of souls."

While this church was being built, a number of the members of the society withdrew and built a meeting-house at Ashdod. The existence of two churches of the same faith in the same locality made difficult the development of both. Had effort been centered in one society, progress would have been more rapid.

At the time of the dedication of the new church on High Street, there was an indebtedness of thirty-five hundred dollars. Before the service had been concluded, the debt had been reduced by eight hundred dollars through contributions and subscriptions. Sale of the old church building and lot produced three hundred dollars; and the balance of the debt was reduced by pew rentals.

The ministers serving this little church have been numerous. Because of this fact, the church has received a well rounded ministry. Since the erection of the new building, the terms of the pastors have been brief. Most of them have been theo-

## *Churches and Cemeteries*

logical students who have served only during the academic year and then have gone to wider fields. The church is proud of the fact that many of its ministers have gone to larger opportunities. One of the early pastors, Rev. George W. Wooding, who resigned in 1869, became chaplain of the Connecticut State Prison.

It is interesting to note that Rev. Winfield Hall, pastor in 1883, was the first of our pastors to live within the bounds of his charge.

In 1886, Rev. A. N. Searls raised money to have the church painted. The next year, Rev. F. L. Brooks, a student minister, moved his family to West Duxbury and began his efforts to pay the debt; and in 1888 was held a jubilee marking the end of indebtedness.

In about 1895, the West Duxbury and Marshfield churches were formed into a circuit served by one Methodist minister. After the dissolution of the circuit some years later, the West Duxbury church was served alone.

In 1913, the West Duxbury church and that at Bryantville were formed into a circuit, and Rev. W. T. Johnson was appointed to serve the newly organized parish. During his four-year term, the church building was reshingled, and through the help of Mr. A. Carnegie, an organ was purchased. Led by Rev. Newell S. Booth, now a missionary in the Belgian Congo, Africa, the congregation met on two occasions for a "painting party"; they painted the outside of the building and redecorated

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the interior. A concrete walk was built and the lawn was graded. In 1927, the sixtieth anniversary of the church was celebrated.

In the years 1932 to 1936, under the able leadership of Rev. J. Richard Sneed, the church was quickened in spirit and increased in membership. Thirty-seven new members came into the fellowship of the church. The Epworth League was organized and is now going forward under the competent leadership of Miss Agnes Tervainen. The young people's choir was also organized. During this same period, The Ladies' Aid recarpeted and improved the church in many ways.

Rev. Tharold C. Northup, the present pastor, succeeded Mr. Sneed.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of West Duxbury has been a valuable aid to the community, largely through the effective efforts of a few devoted members under the energetic leadership of Mr. M. R. Putnam, a layman in the church. In appreciation of what the church has meant to them, a number of people have left endowments. Such gifts have increased the usefulness and effectiveness of the church.

## CHURCHES AT ASHDOD

Methodist Episcopal, and Free Christian Society  
(Adventist Chapel)

**I**N 1867 the Methodist Episcopal church which had stood since 1832, was taken down, and material from it was used to build a church of the same faith in West Duxbury. Somewhat later, a chapel was built on the same site and was used for Methodist worship. Rev. Bartholomew Otheman, Rev. Chase Taylor and Rev. Mr. Bosworth were among the pastors.

Still later, this chapel was sold to the Free Christian Society, popularly known as Adventists. The pastors of this church were Rev. Robert B. Swan and, later, Rev. Jairus C. Osgood. In this chapel and in the dormitories and dining-hall later constructed, notable conventions of this denomination have been held during the spring and fall for forty years. Though the society is at present inactive and without a minister, the semiannual conventions are continued.

—Compiled from information furnished by  
**MRS. MARY E. BAKER**

## BEULAH CHAPEL

**B**EULAH CHAPEL on Union Street was built in the fall of 1902, on land given by Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Hunt of Duxbury. The Chapel was paid for by free will offerings.

Ministers who have officiated at Beulah Chapel have included Rev. Frederick Kidder, Rev. Mr. Pugsley, Rev. Newell Booth, Rev. Virgil M. Hoover, Rev. Eugene Lloyd, Rev. Howard Randall.

## ST. FRANCIS XAVIER MISSION HOUSE (MIRAMAR)

**I**N 1910, the archdiocese of Boston purchased from the Samuel Loring heirs a portion of their estate in Island Creek, with brick house and cottage. For three years, His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, used it as a summer residence and gave to it the name, "Miramar." During the next nine years, "it offered wholesome recreation to Catholic girls of the archdiocese."

In 1922, it was opened as a preparatory seminary of the Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D.) and was named the St. Francis Xavier Mission House. This is the third mission house of this society in America. Instrumental in its establishment were Rev. William Gier, former superior-general, and Rev. Father Janser, now a missionary in India. The first rector was Rev. Anthony Hullin, S.V.D.

The school, which began with seven boys, now is preparing one hundred boys for the foreign missionary priesthood. The course covers completely four high school years.

There are seven buildings now in use and about eighty acres of land. The household consists of

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one hundred boys, eleven priests, ten lay brothers who are part of an associate lay brotherhood, and seven sisters who are in charge of the kitchen and laundry.

In tailor shop, office, garage, and boiler-room, in masonry, carpentry, electricity, gardening, and housework, the brothers are efficient, even skilful. The brothers and students have transformed a cranberry bog into a pond and have built a bridge, wall, and lighthouse and have installed a diving-board. They have developed a park and made a beautiful Lourdes Grotto.

Originally, the property was far from being in condition for a playground of any sort. By long and persevering labor, a recreation field has been built, with tennis courts, baseball diamond and handball court.

The purpose is to accomplish proper balance of devotion, study, and recreation. The present rector is Rev. Max Hoffman, S.V.D.

—Compiled from information furnished by  
**REV. MAX HOFFMAN**

## THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

By Rev. George A. Gately

THE Catholics of Duxbury on July 4, 1937, will celebrate the tercentenary of the town in special services in the Holy Family Church. Patriotism, as well as religion, will be emphasized at the Parish Mass, so that the event will be happily remembered for a long time to come by those who are present.

A word now about the congregation of this church. In the summer, many Catholic families who are visitors, are attendants of this mission church. The same may be said of a very great number of people who play the role of summer employees. The all-year-round attendants must not be unmentioned in this article. This group is small in number, but especially active in support of, and in attendance at, this mission church.

Now just a word about the history of the church. Some time before the Holy Family Church was built, when the Duxbury locality was just a mission, Rev. John J. Buckley, pastor of St. Peter's Church in Plymouth, purchased from Mrs. Carrie Adams, daughter of Professor Francis Howard, the site of

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the church. To accommodate the summer Catholics of Duxbury, Father Buckley arranged for services in Duxbury Hall, in July, 1902.

An elderly resident gives the information that the first Mass in Duxbury was celebrated by a Rev. Father Crowley, a visitor to the diocese, then a guest at the Standish Hotel.

During the summer of 1902, and through July, 1903, Mass was said in the same Duxbury Hall. In August of 1903 and during the remainder of the season, Mass was said in a tent pitched on the site of the present church. From the summer of 1904 until the summer of 1934, all Catholic services were held in Mattakeeset Hall.

Although Duxbury had been a mission of Kingston since 1908, when His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, appointed Rev. Andrew F. Haberstroh first resident Pastor of Kingston, active building in Duxbury did not take live form until Rev. James H. Courtney had succeeded Father Haberstroh. Duxbury Catholics were pleased when Father Courtney announced that a church would be built. Natives and visitors displayed great loyalty to him and to his idea by giving generously of their means. The church was paid for before it had been completed.

This article would not be adequate without mention of a priest who earned the distinction of being well liked by all. May no one who comes to these parts ever forget Rev. Robert Hinchcliffe. He was an amiable and devoted priest. All were pleased

### *Churches and Cemeteries*

when, in 1936, he was promoted to a more important assignment. His transfer was, however, regretted by all. The Rev. Daniel F. Leahy is assistant to the present Pastor of Kingston, Rev. George A. Gately.

## CEMETERIES

MYLES STANDISH CEMETERY received its name in 1892 when, as a result of pains-taking research in which a leading part was played by Rev. E. J. V. Huiginn, pastor of the Church of St. John the Evangelist, the old burying ground was found to be the resting place of Captain Myles Standish.

Located between Hall's Corner and Bailey's Corner, and including the lot where stood the original Duxbury church in 1632, the cemetery is as old as the town. In it lie men and women of every generation that has lived in Duxbury. Here rest Pilgrims who bore arms with Captain Standish, colonists who fought with Colonel Benjamin Church against King Philip, Colonials who campaigned with General Winslow against the French, Minute Men who marched in the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ichabod Alden, and veterans of the War of 1812.

In a pamphlet, *The Graves of Myles Standish and Other Pilgrims*, printed in 1892, in which Mr. Huiginn gave a detailed account of the results of his studies, he stated that "John Alden, his wife, Priscilla, and all the old settlers of the town lie buried

## *Churches and Cemeteries*

in the old cemetery" to which his discovery gave a new name.

To the Duxbury Rural Society belongs the credit for having transformed the unfenced, rather neglected burying ground into an orderly cemetery. In 1889, with the consent of the selectmen, the Rural Society employed Melzar Brewster to clear away the woods and underbrush and mow the grass in the cemetery grounds. Familiar with the legend that the grave of Captain Standish had been marked by two stones set about six feet apart on the east-west line, Mr. Brewster presently came upon two similarly placed stones of triangular shape. Careful excavations, directed by Frederick B. Knapp, president of the Rural Society, produced evidence which convinced investigators that this was the long-lost grave of Duxbury's first military commander. Near-by graves were identified as those of members of the Standish family.

In 1931, the town provided money for interment of the Standish remains in a metal receptacle encased in concrete.

While it is probable that almost all of the old settlers are buried somewhere within the limits of the cemetery, there is no way of making definite identifications. In the beginning, there was no definite cemetery plan. There were no records of the location of lots. No doubt, the early residents believed the inscriptions on the slate headstones were sufficient. But time and weather obliterated many of these identifying marks. Many other headstones,

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loosened from their bases, became misplaced; and the graves which they had marked were left without identification. Still others of these old slate slabs were stolen by ghoulish souvenir hunters to whom even the rights of the dead meant nothing.

But it is only the oldest of the graves that are unmarked and plotted in cemetery records. Among the known stones is one bearing the name of Jonathan Alden, marking the only known Duxbury grave of a son of a *Mayflower* passenger.

No more lots are available in Myles Standish Cemetery.

The other large burial place is Mayflower Cemetery, so named in 1903. It dates from approximately 1787. A map prepared by Frederick B. Knapp gives a complete plan of lots and owners since that date.

At first comprising twenty acres, the cemetery was increased through the donation of six acres by the Ladies' Cemetery Association in 1921, and later by purchase of considerable land along its southern limits.

In Mayflower Cemetery stands the memorial to the "Soldiers and Sailors who gave their lives for their country in the War of 1861." According to the reports of the cemetery trustees, an increasing number of lots have been purchased during the past few years by summer residents. This is eloquent testimony as to the depth of the appeal of Duxbury to even its part-time residents.

The two smaller cemeteries, Dingley and Ashdod, have reached their capacity. The Ashdod Cemetery,

### *Churches and Cemeteries*

comprising only one and one-half acres, is divided into one hundred fifty family lots.

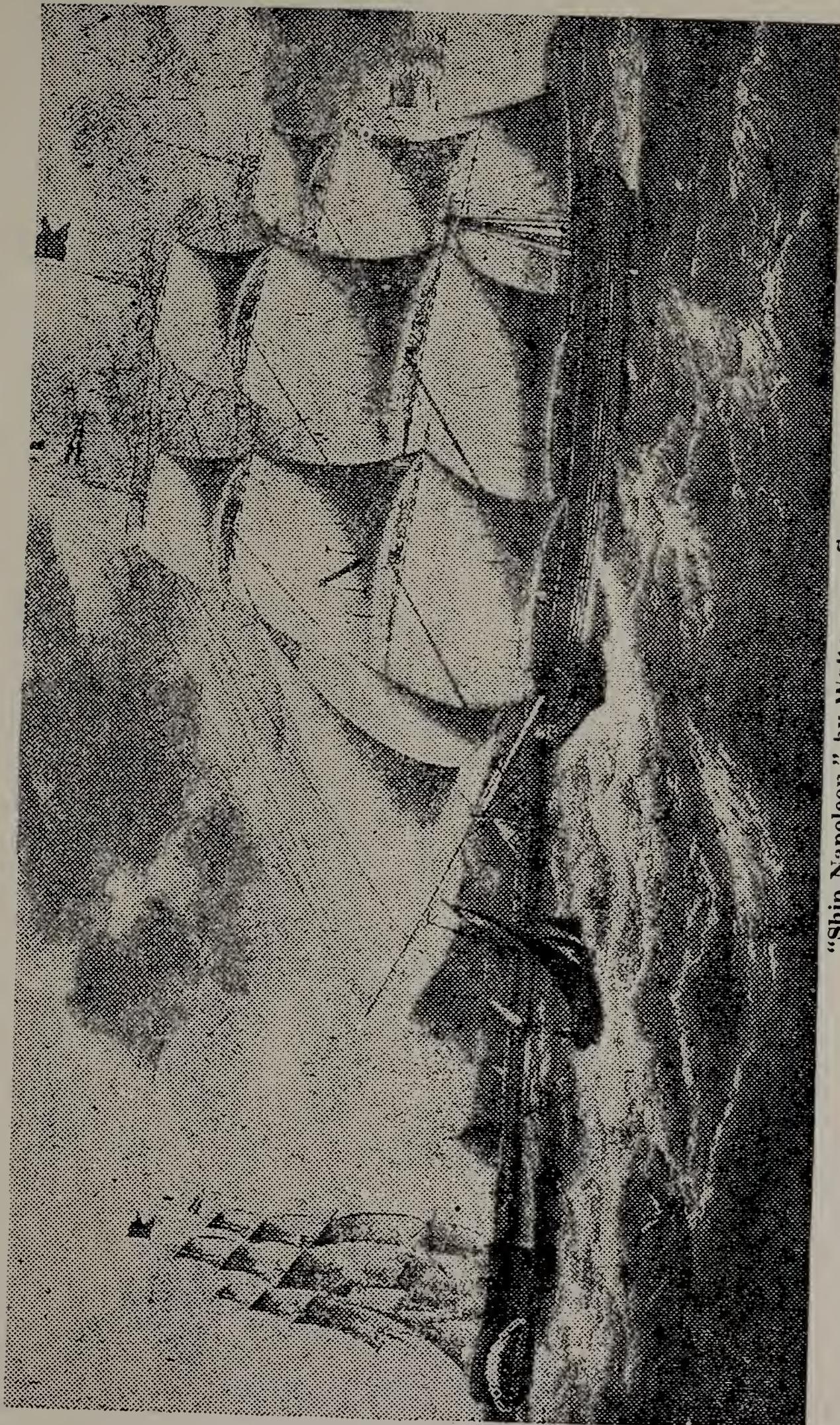
In Duxbury cemeteries there are about two hundred seventy lots for which perpetual care has been provided. Among the two hundred fifty-eight graves of men and women once in the armed service of the United States are those of four Civil War army nurses, Captain Myles Standish, Colonel Jonathan Alden of colonial times, twenty-five Revolutionary War veterans, four veterans of the war of 1812, two hundred twelve Civil War veterans, and eleven veterans of the World War.

Among the gravestones, too, are some which do not mark the final resting place of mortal remains; the men whose names are chiseled on these stones were among that splendid company who went down to the sea in ships, and never returned. So these stones, erected by those left ashore, are merely memorials to lost mariners; they all bear the inscription: "Lost at sea."



## **INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE**





"Ship Napoleon," by Walters and Son. The Vessel Was Built at Duxbury, Mass., About 1810, and Its "Portrait" Painted in the English Channel by the Father and Son Artists in 1831. As Was So Often the Case, the Napoleon Was Depicted in Two Views on the Same Canvas, One in Full Length, the Other From A stern



## INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

HERE is no more direct way of ascertaining the industrial and commercial activities of Duxbury one hundred years ago than to examine the occupations listed in the census of 1838, when the population was recorded as 2,377.

With the exception of the services necessary to any community of comparative size, almost all enterprise in Duxbury was related to farming, shoe-making or shipping.

The list follows:

1 auctioneer	1 insurance agent
7 blacksmiths	1 lawyer
3 boat-builders	2 livery stable proprietors
1 box manufacturer	10 masons
2 butchers	2 master ship-builders
11 calkers	1 milliner
26 carpenters	6 painters
2 clam diggers	6 riggers
7 clergymen	1 sail-maker
2 coal dealers	1 spar-maker
2 coffin warehousemen	5 saw mill proprietors
1 coroner	38 ship carpenters
1 dentist	14 store keepers
1 doctor	1 stove dealer
3 expressmen	72 shoe-makers
200 farmers	1 trowel-maker
1 gunsmith	2 undertakers
2 horse-shoers	2 wheelwrights
1 ice dealer	

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Of the three major industries, only farming remains. Like ship-building, shoemaking flourished during the first half of the nineteenth century, only to fall before the march of machinery.

By 1850, Duxbury had acquired a reputation as a small manufacturing center as well as a shipping port. According to the 1849 issue of Hayward's *Gazetteer of Massachusetts*, published by John P. Jewett & Company of Boston,

"The people of Duxbury are principally engaged in foreign commerce, ship-building, fisheries, and the coasting trade.

"There is manufacturing in the town of leather boots and shoes, salt, cordage, iron and brass castings, woolen cloth, tin ware, pumps, bricks, building stone and lumber."

### *Ship-building*

One hundred years ago, Duxbury was a busy port where the whole people went "down to the sea in ships." Duxbury-built ships, loaded with a goodly share of the world's commerce, ploughed the seven seas, carrying the Stars and Stripes into most of the busy ports of the world.

Duxbury-bred captains, without the aid of the navigating instruments deemed essential to safety today, with little to depend upon except their own knowledge of sun, stars, wind and sea, and an uncanny instinct not unlike that of a homing pigeon, piloted their sturdy little vessels through all sorts of weather.

## *Industries and Commerce*

The great majority came safely home, always to the relief of those who awaited them. Others, overwhelmed by storm or by fire at sea, simply failed to return; and after months of waiting, those on shore finally entered upon the record those brief eloquent words: "Lost at sea."

In skill, courage and intelligence, Duxbury crews were everywhere recognized as without superiors. Though they knew the vast power of the sea, they were always ready to match their skill against it. Like their neighbors of Cape Ann, they seemed to find triumphant satisfaction in tempting the wrath of the reaching waves by crowding on canvas until the masts trembled and straining rigging sang.

Their quiet courage was marked by a readiness to accept calmly whatever fate the ocean might have in store for them—a philosophy summed up in the words: "When my time comes, I'll go."

Duxbury ships and Duxbury men built a worldwide tradition in which their home community felt an intense pride and for the maintenance of which every adult and every child seemed to feel a share of responsibility.

When a ship was to be launched in one of the town's several shipyards, schools were closed, flags were hung out, business was suspended for a few hours, and the townspeople in holiday mood flocked down to the yard to witness the ceremony.

Meticulously dressed men, wearing freshly greased boots, rode on horseback from the outlying parts of the town, with their beribboned wives

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seated precariously behind them. Others came in chaises, rumbling two-wheeled vehicles with wooden axles, while others picked their way on foot through the dust of the roadway.

The fortunate ones had the honor of being on deck when the ship slid into the water. Always foremost among the celebrators, wide-eyed boys invented all manner of ingenious ways of being "useful" in order to have plausible excuses for being on the ship when she slid down the ways. And finally, when she struck the water and rode on an even keel, each of the cheering spectators took a personal pride in the sight, as if he himself had shared in her construction.

From earliest colonial times, ships had been Duxbury's chief means of contact with her neighbors and with the outer world. Trade always had been considered in terms of ships.

By 1837, Duxbury citizens had been building ships for more than a hundred years. Thomas Prince had opened the first shipyard at the foot of Captain's Hill in about 1719, and had built his first ship of wild cherry cut from the forest close by the shore.

His venture was followed shortly by Israel Sylvester at the northwest end of Mill Pond, by Benjamin Freeman at Harden Hill, Samuel Winsor & Samuel Drew on the shore of the Nook, west of Captain's Hill, by Isaac Drew, James Soule, Captain Samuel Delano and by John Oldham at Duck Hill.

On the shore near the Nook, Benjamin Prior

## *Industries and Commerce*

opened a yard; and here, in 1764, was begun a business that became known all over the world. In that year, Ezra Weston took possession of the yard and began his shipbuilding career.

Though Weston was but twenty-one years of age, he immediately began to build larger ships than had been undertaken in Duxbury. Because of the size of the vessels under construction in his yard, it became known as "the navy yard."

In spite of frequent interruptions for military service with the Second Duxbury company under Captain Benjamin Wadsworth, Weston continued building ships during the Revolution. At the conclusion of the war, he was well on his way to the success which was to win for him the name, "King Caesar."

He lived in a big square house on Powder Point. From there he ruled over his little commercial kingdom with a firm but benevolent hand. There was born the son who became his partner in 1798, when the firm name was changed from "E. Weston" to "E. Weston & Son." Father and son worked together until "King Caesar" died in 1822. Ezra, the son, then carried on the business alone.

The Prince yard and nearly all the others of that early period had disappeared by 1837. The demand for larger ships had caused them to be supplanted by larger establishments. Eventually, fourteen shipyards lined Duxbury's waterfront.

In 1837, seventy-one ships were built in Duxbury yards. About nine hundred Duxbury men—almost one-third of the total population—were em-

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ployed in the shipping industry. Lloyds of London listed more than one hundred ships under the ownership of Ezra Weston whom they termed "the largest shipowner in America." Weston was also one of the largest shipowners in the whole world. Duxbury was known as one of America's important ports.

Weston ships were built in the ten-acre yard which Ezra had opened on the Bluefish River in 1834. Yokes of Weston oxen hauled in pine, ash and white oak from the Weston forests in Duxbury and neighboring towns. Weston schooners brought more timber from Maine and special woods from more distant places. Weston packets plied back and forth to Plymouth and Boston with supplies of all sorts. Cordage for the Weston ships was made in the thousand-foot ropewalk; sails were made in the Weston sail loft, and anchors in the Weston forge. Weston fishing vessels brought in their catch to be packed in salt imported in his own ships from Cadiz, St. Ives and Turks Island. The shipbuilding tools were made in the Weston tool-forge. And when Weston ships sailed for the distant ports of the world, they carried goods from the five Weston warehouses on the Weston wharf and were provisioned with pork, beef and vegetables from the Weston farm. Banking was done at the Duxbury Bank, of which Ezra Weston II was president.

Here was an early example of "big business"—but one in which the participants shared readily



E. C. Turner, Photographer

*Ezra Weston II (King Caesar II) From 1820 to 1842 leading  
ship owner in the United States. From Memorial of Weston  
Family.*



## *Industries and Commerce*

with one another and in which a sort of homespun sentiment played a part.

On the death of even so humble a servant as "Dick," a horse which turned the wheel of the rope-walk, King Caesar himself had the animal buried and the grave marked with a stone which now stands near the junction of Powder Point Avenue and King Caesar's Road. In memory of the horse, King Caesar laid aside the responsibilities of his business empire and penned some lines which, for generations, Duxbury children memorized.

According to Arthur Holmes who recalls having learned them at his mother's knee, many years ago, the lines were as follows:

### TO HONEST DICK

Well, he hath shaken the dust of this weary world from his shoes.

He hath broken the reins that bound him to subjection  
And left behind the traces which united him to the load of life.

The Wheel of time shall no more revolve for him.  
But the vast circle of eternity  
Shall roll above him forever.

For the benefit of the hundred Duxbury employees of the Weston business and their neighbors, Ezra Weston continued in operation the general store which his father had opened in a house at the Nook. The scales, measuring devices, the shelves and drawers which once were filled with

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merchandise for supplying the needs of Duxbury families, the counter over which many a bolt of fine cloth was examined and many a bargain struck—all are in good order in the original building. The present owner is Winthrop Winslow.

During its ninety-three years of life, the Weston business was carried on under four firm names. First came "E. Weston," then "E. Weston & Son." When the elder Weston died in 1822, the son continued under the firm name, "Ezra Weston," and continued thus for twenty years, a period during which the business enjoyed its greatest prosperity. In 1842, only a brief time after the second Ezra's two sons, Gershom and Alden, had become members of the firm under the name, "E. Weston & Sons," Ezra died. Until they closed the firm's books in 1857, the two sons continued the business that occupied the water side of the highway now known as "King Caesar's Road."

Like those of their competitors in and around Duxbury, the Weston yards were busy from sunrise to sunset. It was the custom to issue rum to the workmen at mid-morning and again at mid-afternoon and to serve them a hearty dinner at noon.

The workmen, many of whom worked on a part-time basis, had learned their trades through the apprentice system. Each was skilled in his own field. Besides this skill, these Duxbury men put into their work a pride of workmanship which gave to the ships an individuality that made them, in the prac-

E. C. Turner, Photographer

Wallpaper in home of Ezra Weston II, 1808.





## *Industries and Commerce*

tised eyes of experienced shipping men, as distinct as if they had borne on their bows the trade-mark, "Duxbury-built."

The expertness of Duxbury craftsmen and Duxbury crews was a source of mutual pride. Each group had confidence in the other. The builders realized that they were building ships to be handled by men whom they believed to be the finest sailors in the world; they knew, too, that upon their own skill and thoroughness in construction depended the lives of their neighbors who would take the craft to sea. And the knowledge that their vessels had been built by Duxbury artisans made the crews feel the more secure.

Duxbury yards produced vessels of all types then in the merchant service—sloops, schooners, brigs, barkentines and barks, and the tall, picturesque ships.

Oldest and smallest in type were the sloops, built with a bowsprit and single mast. The schooners, so long associated with the fishing industry, had two or three masts and sometimes were equipped with light square topsails.

The typical Duxbury-built brig had two masts consisting of fore and main lower masts, topmasts and topgallants, square-rigged, with square mainsail and topsail. Such a brig was the *Pilgrim* built in 1829 in the Holmes yard in neighboring Kingston and later made famous by a youthful member of her crew, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., in his realistic narrative, "Two Years Before the Mast."

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The barks and ships were magnificent floating pictures that stirred painters to their best work, lofty square-rigged "three-masters" with a long, high bowsprit, and driven fast before the wind by incredible clouds of straining canvas. They were of three hundred to more than eight hundred tons.

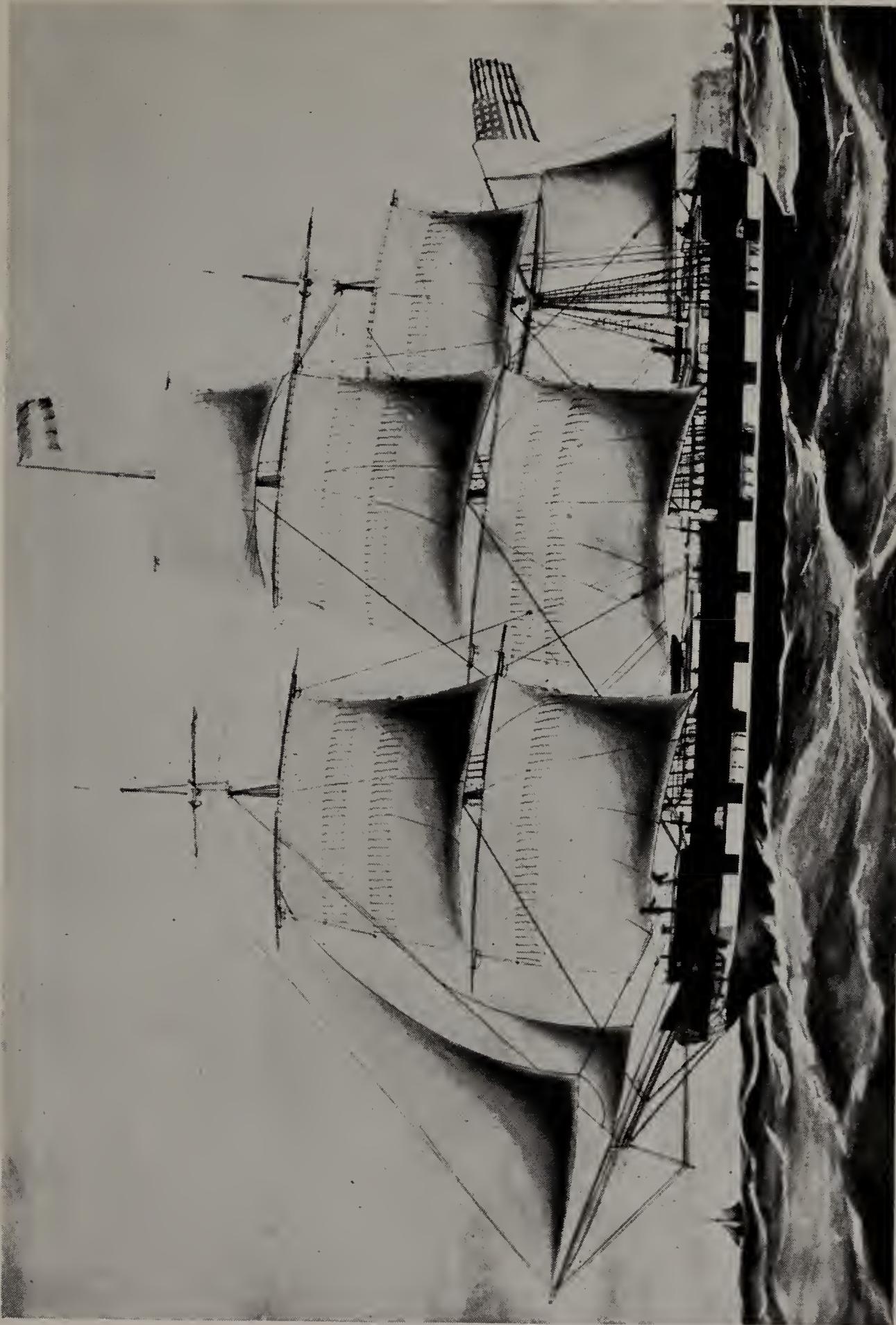
It was a Weston-owned ship, *Hope*, built in 1841, largest New England vessel of her time, that amazed the people of Liverpool with her size when she sailed majestically into that port for the first time.

Though most of the vessels built in Weston yards were sent to sea under the Weston three-striped house-flag of red, white and blue, many were constructed for other owners.

Construction in their yard was continuous. As quickly as one ship was launched, work began on another. Thus sprang up the saying that the E, W, N, S on the weather vane atop the flagpole in the Weston yard did not merely indicate the four points of the compass, but signified: "Ezra Weston's New Ship."

The Weston company alone had an annual gross income of approximately a million dollars and distributed to its hundred Duxbury employees a yearly payroll of some \$120,000. The Duxbury bank did a thriving business while the shipping industry was at its height.

Though the Westons were by far the best known of Duxbury builders, vessels were constantly under construction in other yards in the town. Travelers on the highway were frequently able to see more



E. C. Turner, Photographer  
Ship, "Hope," John Bradford, Master, for a time the largest vessel in New England.  
Launched in Duxbury 1841.



## *Industries and Commerce*

than a dozen vessels on the stocks at the same time.

Among the Weston competitors was Samuel Hall who had been an employee of Ezra Weston for some years following the opening of the yard on Bluefish River. In 1837, Hall established his own shipyard just north of the Weston yard. Here he built two vessels, *Constantine* and *Narragansett* for Boston owners. To have more room and deeper water for the launching of larger ships, Hall went to Noddle Island, now East Boston, in 1840, and built the second shipyard opened in that section. Here he made a long, remarkable record. He launched about one hundred seventy merchant ships, among them the famous clipper, *Surprise*, which smashed all previous records by going from Boston around the Horn to San Francisco, sixteen thousand, three hundred miles, in ninety-six days. The clipper ships hastened the end of the shipbuilding era in Duxbury, where Samuel Hall had received his start as an independent builder.

Adjoining Ezra Weston's yard were establishments owned by Levi Sampson and Luther Turner, both of whom built small vessels for Boston owners.

During this bustling period, it was customary for ships to have elaborately carved decorations on their sterns, and wooden figureheads at their bows. The figurehead tradition is thought to have come down from the Norsemen, who believed that an imposing figure on the bow of a vessel would charm the evil gods of the sea into desisting from any sinister designs they might have had on ships or crew.

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Of the Duxbury craftsmen who made these carvings, one of the best known was Nathaniel Winsor. He was also a maker of the heavy wooden blocks through which ship cordage sang.

Opposite the spot now occupied by the Duxbury Coal and Lumber plant, Seth Sprague operated a yard. The building now known as Sprague Hall was his head house. Whenever a ship was to be launched here, it was necessary to build the ways across the highway to the water, completely blocking the road to traffic.

These wrong-side-of-the-road yards were not uncommon. Yet none in Duxbury was to be compared, for sheer inaccessibility, to the hillside shipyard of Luther Rogers, a mile inland in Marshfield Hills. It required a hundred yoke of oxen to haul Rogers-built ships to water.

North of Samuel Hall's yard, Nathaniel and Joshua Cushing built ships, among them the bark, *Maid of Orleans*.

Deacon George Loring operated an anchor forge and shipyard on the southeast shore of the Mill Pond and launched here a number of merchant ships. For Charles Binney and his son, C. J. F. Binney, Boston owners, Deacon Loring built such ships as the brig, *Cynosure*, the bark, *Grafton*, and the ship, *Binney*. It was the annoying habit of ships launched from this yard to plough into the marshy meadows on the opposite shore of the Bluefish River, from which they were extricated with considerable difficulty.

Barkentine, "Benjamin Dickerman," built in the Levi Sampson Yard by Porter M. Keen and launched in 1875





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Another yard from which ships had to be launched across the highway was that operated early in the nineteenth century by Reuben, Charles and Sylvanus Drew. Brigs, ships and barks for some twenty years slid across the road into the Bluefish River—such barks as *Mary Chilton*, *Hersilia* and *Kensington*, and such ships as *Boreas*, *Minerva*, *Aldebaran* and *Susan Drew*.

In 1849, this yard was taken over by enterprising William Paulding who occupied it for eighteen years. He launched eleven barks, eleven market fishermen and nine schooners. They were built for various owners and sailed to widely separated ports of the world. Among the barks were *Appleton*, *Bay State*, *Jenney Fletcher*, *E. H. Yarnington* and *J. H. Devoll*. For many years following the Civil War, fishermen on the Banks were familiar with such Paulding-built schooners as *Daniel Boone*, *Willie Lincoln*, *Gypsy Queen* and *Village Belle*.

When Mr. Paulding decided to close out his business in 1867, he named his vessel, a schooner, *Mary Amanda*, for his granddaughter, Mary Amanda Bates, who now lives on Cove Street.

In 1856, N. Porter Keen, a former employee of Mr. Paulding, began business for himself in the re-opened yard of Levi Sampson below the bridge on Bluefish River. Here he built the barkentine, *Benjamin Dickerman*, which continued in service until almost the turn of the century, and a whaler, *Mary D. Leach*. These were the days when nearly two hundred whaling ships out of New Bedford

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were painting one of the most colorful pages in American maritime history.

In 1869, Keen launched the *Samuel G. Reed*, the last full-rigged Duxbury-built ship. The steam-driven freighter was rapidly destroying the market for these magnificent old "wind-jammers."

Keen's largest vessel, built in response to the increasing demand for bigger ships, was one of his two Duxbury-built schooners, *Henry J. Lippett*, the largest that had been launched in Duxbury. Because of her conduct at the time of her launching, she was derisively dubbed "Keen's Elephant" and was accused of "tryin' to git back ashore where she belongs." When her six hundred fifty ton bulk slid down the ways, she drove her bow so deep into the marshy ground on the opposite side of the river that the traces of her "tryin' to git back ashore" and of the excavating necessary to free her are still visible.

His experience with the schooner speeded Keen's decision to find larger quarters for building larger vessels. In the following year, 1875, he moved to Weymouth and there continued his work for some twenty years.

The Paulding yard was taken over in 1870 by John and Amos Merritt and Warren Standish, who built the last ship constructed on that site. The following year they moved to the site of Samuel Hall's yard and built there two schooners, *Annie S. Conant*, long a familiar sight along the south shore and in Boston harbor, and the *Addie R. Warner*.



*E. C. Turner, Photographer*

*The Doorway of Gordon Tweed's house. Built by Nathaniel Winsor in 1807 and later occupied by Captain Erastus Sampson.*



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The *Warner* was lost with all hands during a trip in the fruit trade.

In 1875, the Merritt brothers opened a yard south of that which they had shared with Standish, and there built the *Thomas A. Goddard*, a bark of seven hundred fifteen tons, one hundred fifty-four feet in length, the last merchant vessel to be launched in Duxbury.

Such ships as those produced in Duxbury shipyards were sailed throughout the world by Duxbury captains. As often as not, ships and cargoes were uninsured. Many of the captains, in addition to being expert seamen, were astute businessmen. Such a man was Captain David Cushman, Jr., reputed to have been the highest salaried shipmaster out of Boston, home port of his employer, Augustus Hemenway.

Men of the Cushman stamp left port with cargo, with one destination specified. Where they took their ships and their cargoes from that first port, how long they would be gone, what business they would transact—these were matters frequently left to their own sound judgment. Such was the mutual trust between owner and captain.

Though many of these “sea-going businessmen” were gray-haired veterans of many years of service, others were barely out of their ’teens. At an age when most youths of today are more concerned with frivolities than with responsibilities, these captains were navigating ships to Europe, China, Japan, South America and the African coast and

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carrying to successful conclusion business transactions with the shrewdest traders in the world's ports.

At a time of life when most men of today are merely beginning their professional careers, these youthful executives were able, if they chose, to retire in financial security.

During the maritime era, whole families of Duxbury men went to sea. Among them were the Dawes brothers—Allen, Josephus, and James—of Island Creek. They were widely known as men who liked to crowd on canvas and who insisted upon having crews that relished that dangerous practice.

Born in 1812, Captain Allen took ships on numerous fast trips between American ports and the West Indies, in the fruit trade. In that trade, speed was essential; for two or more vessels sometimes left a port at the same time for the same destination. The first to arrive would have the cream of the market. Captain Allen exacted speed from the brig *Gustavus* on her maiden voyage from New York to Cork, carrying grain to famine-stricken Ireland.

Upon his death, Captain Allen's command was passed along to his brother, Captain Josephus. Many owners were more than mere cold-blooded traders.

James, the third captain-brother, was admired and loved for his numerous rescues at sea, feats which were made possible only by a combination of rare courage and extraordinary seamanship.

As captain of the little brig, *Belize*, he was successful in rescuing some twenty people from the

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founding ship, *Mameluke*, off New York. So great had been the hardships of those rescued that Captain Dawes disembarked them at New York instead of continuing directly on to Boston. Furnished with a legal loophole, the hard-bitten Boston merchant who had chartered the Dawes ship insisted with complete accuracy that Captain James Dawes had "deviated from his course"; and he refused to pay. This wiped out the captain's finances temporarily. But it did not prevent him from "deviating from his course" to make rescues in numerous later instances.

In 1861, Captain James added to the Dawes tradition of speed by driving his ship from San Francisco to Yokohama in the unprecedented time of thirty-five days.

The brothers Burditt were other well known captains. Captain Alfred Burditt set sail for the fishing banks one day in 1859, in the smart brig, *Bird of the Wave*. He never came back. The record of his ship closed with "Lost with all hands."

Captain Andrew Burditt, going right ahead with his profession, amazed shipping men by taking a ship loaded with 160,000 feet of lumber out of Wilmington, North Carolina, and "rollin' down to Rio" de Janeiro in forty-five days. This was the same Captain Burditt whose bark, *Neapolitan*, en route with a fruit cargo from the Mediterranean to Boston, was seized and burned off Gibraltar by the Confederate cruiser, *Sumter*, in 1862.

Captains Charles F. Winsor, John Weston, Otis Baker, Otis Baker, Jr., John C. Dawes, Erastus

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Sampson, Freeman Soule, John Bradford, Edwin Powers and his son, Charles, who commanded lightships at Vineyard Sound, Great Round Shoal and Succonosset Shoal, John Weston and Elbridge G. Winsor were but a few of the Duxbury captains who helped to establish the Duxbury tradition of seamanship.

Among the last of his colorful kind is Captain Parker Hall, known up and down the New England coast as "the lone mariner." Sometimes, when unable to find suitable help, he sails his schooner from port to port alone.

Before 1870, the demand for speed and size to match the steamships had brought the clipper ships. These were much too large to be built in the little yards of Duxbury.

Gold had been discovered on the west coast of the United States. The eyes of America had turned quickly from the east and from the sea to the western frontier. The Scituate-built ship, *Columbia*, in addition to having been the first American ship to sail around the world, had nosed her way into a great river on the west coast. Captain Gray had named the river "Columbia" in honor of his ship, and had brought back the news that caused Captains Lewis and Clark to be sent out to investigate the accuracy of the mariner's report. So a neighbor of Duxbury had contributed toward changing the commercial life not only of Duxbury, but of the entire nation.

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The clippers fled around the Horn and up the California coast in the race for the new trade that followed the discovery of gold. The outreaching railroads increased the demand for speed and more speed.

The nation became convinced that the fortunes of the future lay not across the seas, but in the west. America ceased to be a maritime nation, and turned her tremendous energy toward the development of her new frontier and the upbuilding of trade in this virgin territory.

The demand for sturdy little sailing ships ceased. Some of the Duxbury ship-builders moved up to Weymouth and to Boston and continued in their trade, generation after generation. Others laid aside their tools.

Some of the Duxbury captains took their ships out of larger ports. Others preferred to retire to residences as solidly built as the ships which they had commanded, residences constructed by the same carpenters who built ships.

The shipyards, however, lay idle and neglected. The traveler who passed along the highway from which more than a dozen ships once could be seen under construction, could now only draw upon his memory for the re-creation of those days when Duxbury was one of the world's busy ports, when Duxbury ships and Duxbury men were carrying her good names to the far corners of the earth.

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### *Fisheries*

In 1837, some fifty fishing vessels out of Duxbury were making regular trips to the Georges and the Grand Banks. Cod and mackerel comprised the major portion of their catch. For more than thirty years thereafter, Duxbury fishing produced an average annual business ranging from \$60,000 to \$80,000.

Along the Duxbury waterfront, provision was made for every phase of the fishing industry—curing, packing, storing and shipping.

On the ground now occupied by the homes of William Winsor and Spencer Winsor were flakes—long rows of drying-racks—where the fish were cured for packing.

Much of the salt used in the packing was obtained by the evaporation of sea water in great kettles beneath which fires were kept burning. Because of the expense of the fuel required for this purpose, most of the work was done in the summer months when the rays of the sun could be utilized. Old records indicate that approximately one pound of salt was obtained from each five gallons of sea water evaporated.

There were salt works at the Drew shipyard at Powder Point, at the Sampson yard in the Nook, and on the land where the Sheldon orchard now flourishes. Because of the slowness and the expense of this evaporating process, no attempt was made to



*Samuel Frazar. Samuel Hunt. Duxbury fishermen.*



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produce salt for the commercial market; only enough was made to fill the needs of the fish-packers.

Instead of producing their own salt, the Westons preferred to import from Cadiz, Turks Island and St. Ives the supply necessary for packing the fish caught by vessels of their fleet.

Mackerel was packed in barrels; the salt cod in neat boxes. There was a ready market in southern ports, the West Indies and certain ports of Europe.

While awaiting shipment, the packed fish was stored in warehouses near the flakes. Nathaniel Winsor and Joshua Winsor, and the Westons owned large warehouses at their own wharves, while smaller buildings were scattered along the waterfront.

The value which European epicures set upon Duxbury salt cod is indicated by an incident related in *Duxbury Sketches*, by Jerusha Faunce Hathaway.

In a shipload of salt cod sent to England, Captain Joshua Winsor included a box for each of his two daughters. With the money obtained from the sale of the two boxes, one daughter purchased her silk wedding gown, while the other bought a ring which is still in the possession of the family.

During the entire period from the early settlement of Duxbury to the close of the ship-building era, individual owners operated single fishing vessels out of Duxbury harbor. Fleets were operated

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by larger owners such as the Westons and the Sampsons.

Deep sea fishing, as Duxbury knew it, gradually gave way to the more modern methods. Seiners replaced the hand lines. Trawlers gathered in a single hour more than the old-time schooners could haul over the side in several days. Mass production in the fishing industry changed the nature of the business; and as rapidly as the steam-driven fishing vessels came in, the colorful fishing schooners disappeared.

Though schooners still are used in fishing in some few ports, the last fisherman to use Duxbury as a home port sailed out of the harbor more than fifty years ago.

### *Shoe Shops*

Many of the men who went to sea during the summer months, spent the winter making boots and shoes in neat little shops. Scores of small one-room buildings, some of them no more than eight by ten feet in area, dotted the county.

Usually, these shops were located in the door-yards beside the homes of their proprietors. They were solidly built, neatly finished with shingled roofs and clapboards, and painted to match the houses beside which they stood. Frequently, they were bordered by neat flower gardens and garnished by climbing vines.

There were numbers of these tiny shops in Duxbury; Tinkertown, in particular, was a center of shoemaking.

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In 1837, Duxbury shops produced more than forty-two thousand pairs of shoes and one thousand pairs of boots, the combined value of which was nearly \$56,000. The shoemakers made their product not only for individuals and stores in towns in the vicinity, but for export. There was a good market for them in southern ports, where much New England trade was carried on, and, to a lesser extent, in England and Europe.

Every phase of the work was, of course, done by hand and by one man. Much of the output was "made-to-measure business." Individuals were accustomed to having boots and shoes made to suit their personal preferences, much as tailor-made clothing is ordered today. One result was that, in much the same manner in which the family of today employs a family physician, the family of the shipbuilding era had its favorite shoemaker.

Gradually, however, as standardization advanced, the individual order became less common. Bulk orders for wholesale or retail stores became routine matters. And by the time that the Civil War had begun to threaten, sewing machines had made such inroads in the shoe industry that the small one-man shops dwindled rapidly in number.

As early as 1881, Chambers's *Encyclopaedia* reported:

"The plan of making boots and shoes by isolated workmen at their own homes, has been found quite incompatible with the modern necessities of trade. As in the case of the hand-loom weaver, the shoe-maker of the old school has had to

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succumb to machinery. After an unsuccessful struggle to oppose the introduction of sewing-machines, these are now coming generally into use, and men are employed in large numbers together in what may be called shoe-factories."

So one of Duxbury's most colorful institutions—the tiny shoe shop which served as forum, news center, and, as many women insisted, loafing place—was thrust permanently aside. As reminders of a more leisurely period, however, many of the little buildings remain—some of them serving as garages, others as studios or workshops, and still others merely as convenient catch-alls in which are stored cast-off articles and imperishable memories. And in the garrets of old Duxbury houses, there are still some of the benches, clamps, pegs, awls and lasts used by the shoemakers of old.

### *Mills and Stores*

Milling in the town began in 1640, when William Hiller and George Pollard, having been granted exclusive rights for grinding grain, built a grist mill on the stream which thenceforth has been known as Mill Brook.

About one hundred years later, Eleazer Harlow and associates built a fulling mill, and the Southworths were preparing to build the second gristmill in the town.

There were sawmills in Duxbury from the beginning of the eighteenth century until the time



*Old Factory at Millbrook and surrounding country, 1890*



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when timber in the near-by forests had been depleted.

Three sawmills were built in about 1700; two of them were operated for more than one hundred years. The first, on land now in the possession of the heirs of Horatio Chandler, was owned by Isaac Partridge, Ephraim Holmes and Nathaniel Loring. In 1836, it was rebuilt and continued in operation by Jared Howland. The second mill, owned by Ichabod Bartlett, in Ashdod, ceased operations before the Revolution, while the third, built by Samuel Seabury, continued to function for almost one hundred fifty years, until it was abandoned in 1848.

Town records of 1767 show that a group of citizens headed by Joseph Drew was granted permission to erect a gristmill on Bluefish River. In 1808, when the bridge across the river was built, power for milling was made available by construction of water-gates to harness the tide. Here a gristmill, driven by the tides, was operated by the ship-builders, Deacon George Loring, Reuben Drew and Samuel A. Frazar. Later, Edward Winslow became the proprietor.

The two most widely known mills of the past century were those of Isaac Keen and the James T. Ford & Company. The Ford mill was founded earlier and was operated longer.

Isaac Keen, who had been a merchant in New Orleans, came to Duxbury in 1865 and built a three-story structure, one hundred feet in length, on the stream which is now known as "Keen's Brook."

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For some thirty years, he manufactured shingles and building lumber for local use and for shipment to other towns. Many of the houses built during and after the Civil War were constructed of lumber produced at the Keen mill.

For many years, a Duxbury-built schooner, named *Isaac Keen*, was operated in the coasting trade, and as late as 1900, was reported to be in service in Bucksport, Maine.

During the war of 1812, when the British blockade shut off the supply of sail-cloth required by the ship-builders of Duxbury, the Weston firm promptly organized the Duxbury Woolen & Linen Company. The company was taken over later by Nathaniel Ford and his two brothers, James and Peleg. Under the firm name of James T. Ford & Company, the brothers produced sacks, yarns, trowels, meal and cloth. They established a wide market for their satinet, an imitation satin made with cotton warp and wool filling.

In conjunction with their mill, the Fords operated a sloop, *Mink*, commanded by Captain Timothy Trusty. Their vessel left Bourne's Wharf in Duck Hill River with products of the mill, and brought back from other ports raw materials for processing, and merchandise to be distributed at their retail store. Much of their product was sold for cash in Boston and other Massachusetts coastal towns.

The Ford account book of 1829, which is now in the possession of the Misses Harriett and Florence Ford, granddaughters of Nathaniel, records the



E. C. Turner, Photographer

*First department store in America, "Ford's Store," established 1826. Burned 1921.*



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shipment of two cases of satinet, via the *Mink*, to Shaw & Tiffany of Baltimore, in exchange for southern corn to be ground into a new "Johnnycake material."

The Misses Ford also have some of the recipes for dyes, and drafts of some of the patterns which were used at the mill. One recipe calls for copperas and logwood for making black dye, another for alum, nutgall and copperas. One of the drafts prescribes "thirty-two spools of white, two of blue, two white and blue twisted for the filling; warp of gray." There are directions for making gay cloth in which blue, deep blue and orange are combined, and for a gray shawl with a bright plaid border.

For almost ninety years the mill was operated; during its later years, its work was confined to weaving. Celebrating vandals destroyed it by fire on July 4, 1900.

The Ford store carried a carefully selected assortment of domestic and imported merchandise for almost every purpose. It was the first department store in New England. It was burned down in 1921.

During the early part of the past century, two of the best known storekeepers in Duxbury were Major Judah Alden who manifested a severely solicitous interest in the uses to which his customers intended to put the purchases made at his store, and versatile Thomas Soule.

Mr. Soule was known for his readiness to undertake almost any sort of legitimate trade. From 1819 to 1870, he sold services as well as merchandise.

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Among his best customers were the owners of the schooner, *Pilgrim*.

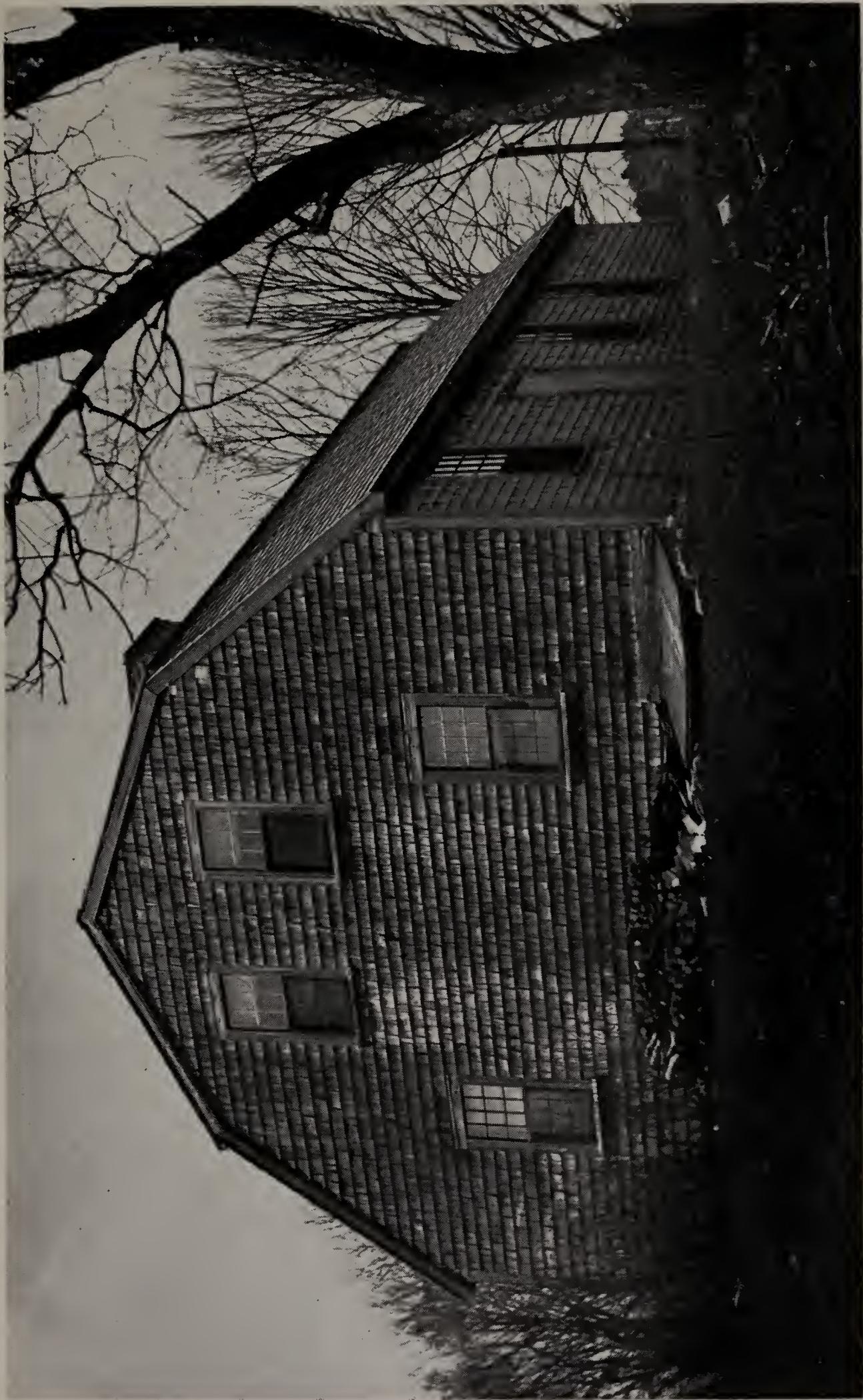
The variety of Mr. Soule's enterprise is indicated by the entries in one of his account books. He performed such services as mending sails, making a topmast, graining, pointing a crowbar (price, ten cents); and he sold such merchandise as twine, bread, tar, ballast, brooms, wine, plates, mugs, paint, mackerel, sugar and cordage.

Among the several other stores of this same period were the Hicks store which stood on St. George Street, and the Union Store, where ship-builders, mariners and leading citizens of the town gathered, not only to make purchases, but to exchange and discuss the news of the world. The Duxbury Rural and Historical Society occupies the building today.

Several of the Duxbury stores, catering chiefly to the needs of ship-owners, carried stocks for outfitting ships for their voyages. These stores were located near the wharves. Others, supplying the needs of families, were located on the highways near the various centers of population; they occupied rooms in the residences of their proprietors.

The custom of operating a store within the home was inaugurated by Alexander Standish, son of Captain Myles Standish; and it was not until after the Civil War that this plan was superseded by the establishment of stores in buildings devoted exclusively to business.

By way of contrast with the shops operated now



E. C. Turner, Photographer

*House of Alexander Standish (1666)*



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by independent proprietors and by the "chain" companies, it is interesting to inspect the Weston store of the past century, to compare the custom of creating demand today with the more simple practice of merely attempting to satisfy the needs of customers many years ago. The Weston store is now in the possession of Winthrop Winslow, but for many years has not been in operation.

## *Duxbury Clams*

The friendly Indian, Squanto, introduced the early colonists to the shellfish which Elder Brewster later described as "treasures hid in the sand." Without the shellfish from the flats and the fish from the sea, the inroads of hunger would have been far more serious. From the beginning of the settlement, shellfish have provided the people of Duxbury with one of their chief sources of livelihood.

For many generations after the founding of the town, shellfish were used for bait for deep sea fishing and for the feeding of hogs; the supply was treated as if it were inexhaustible. Colonists allowed their hogs to feed on the flats until the depletion of the clam beds aroused them to the necessity of putting a stop to the practice.

Shellfish for two hundred years were so numerous that piles of their shells were left on the shore. The shells were used in road-building, in providing lime for the manufacture of mortar necessary to brick-masonry, and in the mixing of plaster. In colonial

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times, some shells were reported large enough to be used as trowels and shovels.

"The oisters," wrote a colonist named Wood, "be great ones in forme of a shoo horn, some be a foote long. . . . This fish, without the shell, is so big that it must admit of a division before you can get it into your mouth."

If old timers are to be believed, lobsters weighing twenty-five pounds and clams of more than a foot in length were not uncommon. Clams dug today are marketable when two inches long; and the supply continues only because of efforts toward conservation.

As early as 1869, the selectmen of Duxbury, Kingston and Plymouth were authorized to designate three commissioners "who shall have full control of the digging of clams and taking of eels within the harbors of said towns." This step was taken primarily to protect the supply from fishermen from outside communities.

The first planting of clams by the community was done in that year.

In spite of having provided against abuses by outside fishermen, the citizens found that their own fellow-townersmen would have to be curbed. But these efforts were not effective until 1898.

The business acumen and organizing ability of Edgar Loring of Island Creek was one of the factors which finally prompted drastic regulations and the appointment of officials to compel enforcement.

During the eighties and nineties Mr. Loring em-

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ployed numbers of his neighbors to dig clams. Every day, after the digging had been completed, he sent the harvest in a wagon train to Taunton and Fall River for shipment to more distant places. Levi Perkins drove the horses which pulled the first wagon of the train; the other horses had been trained to follow close behind. In that formation, the wagon train traveled to the Winnetuxet River, where horses and driver were replaced for the second lap of the journey.

All clam digging on a large scale was halted by town order in 1898. George P. Cushman, James K. Burgess and John A. Irwin were designated to supervise the seeding and protection of flats set aside as reservations for clam propagation; and at the same time, they were instructed to enforce a prohibition against the netting of mackerel and herring. These fish, like the clams, had been depleted so rapidly as to alarm the citizens of the shore towns in the vicinity.

The early steps for conservation were made difficult, however, because many people looked upon them as restrictions of rights which should be considered inalienable.

In the spring of 1899, Kirby's Flat, Round Flat, Mussel Bed and Little Mussel Bed were designated as reservations and were planted with clams.

At this time, the town was trying the experiment of leasing tidal flats to individuals who would agree to abide by certain conservation policies. At the annual town meeting of March 5, 1900, one such

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experiment was pronounced a success; and the lease of Frank W. Boyer was extended for five years.

The same town meeting designated as reservations for clam propagation all flats separated from the shore by channels, and provided three hundred dollars for seeding these areas. As special constable with authority to arrest without warrant violators of the clam laws, Warren E. Peterson was assigned to enforce the ordinances protecting fish and game. But because of the large area to be covered, and the hostile attitude of a portion of the public toward conservation, Mr. Peterson found it difficult to enforce the laws.

However, confident that progress was being made, the town meeting of March 4, 1901, voted to the owners of waterfront property the right to plant one-third of their frontage with clams; the planting area in each property was limited to a maximum of one hundred lineal feet. This tidal flat area was given the protection of the law against trespass.

To give better protection to the reservations, the town authorized the appointment of Samuel G. Chandler and Clarence Smith to assist Mr. Peterson. In spite of gradually diminishing local opposition to the conservation policies, the persistent law violation by residents of other towns kept the three wardens busy.

Finally, aroused by the boldness of non-resident poachers, the town meeting of 1905 ordered police to arrest any non-resident found digging clams within the town limits. To cultivate public opinion

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favorable to strict enforcement, the selectmen were instructed to post notices urging support of the clam laws, and to print in the town report the state and local ordinances pertaining to clam conservation.

In 1912, the town expanded its leasing policy by voting to grant to Duxbury residents non-transferable leases of areas of not more than one acre to an individual.

Because of the wide differences of opinion as to the policy to be pursued, ordinances passed from time to time had conflicting purposes, and so made enforcement difficult. In an effort to remove these contradictions, the town meeting of March 7, 1914, repealed all regulations that had been passed in previous years, and promulgated a set of new ordinances. Controversy, however, continued.

There appears to be universal recognition of the need for conservation to prevent destruction of the clam industry; but the method by which destruction is to be prevented has been a subject for sharp debate.

The regulations published by the selectmen in 1937 permit any Duxbury resident to dig without charge a bushel of shellfish every week, either as bait for his own use, or as food for his family. For commercial use, an all-year resident may purchase for five dollars a permit to take by his own labor seaworms, eels and shellfish. The first one hundred bushels of shellfish may be taken and sold without added cost to the digger; but thereafter, he must pay five cents a bushel for clams and oysters dug

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for distribution. Permits are not transferable and digging on Sunday is forbidden.

Though these rules met with the approval of the majority, they were protested by the Duxbury Shellfish Association as discriminatory.

In spite of opposition, however, Duxbury and adjoining towns continue to tighten the restrictions on clam digging. The Duxbury selectmen, in their town report point out that this is done ". . . to keep this a paying business." And they state: "The clam industry has proven itself to be our chief business."

Some thirty-five hundred acres of tidal flats in Duxbury are under the protection of shellfish wardens. In 1932 alone, the wardens daily found from twenty to two hundred non-residents poaching on Duxbury clam beds. A dozen organized groups comprising some sixty men were making a daily business of digging quahaugs until arrest and prosecution halted their activities. Poachers, according to the warden's report, "took everything in shellfish, regardless of size and number."

In 1933, more than one thousand bushels of clams, quahaugs and oysters were planted. Taken from other beds during that same year and officially recorded, were seven thousand bushel of clams (nine hundred gallons when shucked), seven thousand bushels of quahaugs and fifteen hundred bushels of razor-fish. The value of this harvest was estimated as \$32,770. Eight thousand bushels of shellfish were marketed in 1934.

## *Industries and Commerce*

In 1935, seventy Duxbury men were employed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to carry on the work of conservation under the direction of town officials. These men seeded some four thousand bushels of clams and one hundred eighty bushels of quahaugs. They destroyed thirty-five hundred bushels of cockles. Such work is done in co-operation with the authorities of Kingston and Plymouth.

Shellfish have done much to alleviate the hardship caused by the economic depression. During the so-called "depression years," some of the men of Duxbury who might have found it necessary to appeal for public relief have successfully fought the depression by digging clams. It is their custom to row out with the receding tide, often before daylight, and to dig until the returning tide compels them to take to their boats, in winter chilled through, but bringing back plentiful quantities of shellfish for their table and for sale.

While there is no closed season, the selectmen cause certain flats and shores to be closed to digging until re-seeded clams have grown to the required length of two inches.

The shellfish known in Duxbury as the quahaug is more widely known as the hardshell or little-neck clam, and is readily identified by the blue about the edges of the shell. It was this blue portion which was used by the coastal Indians in making their best grade of wampum; and this explains its name, *Venus mercenaria*.

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

The so-called long-neck clam—*Mya arenaria*—is the true Duxbury clam. To the people of Duxbury, it is the most valuable of their “treasures hid in the sand.”

### *Cranberries*

One of the first tasks performed by the men who came across the bay from Plymouth to clear the arable land of Duxbury, was to mark for protection the fruits and wild berries which the Indians had taught them to use. Among these were the cranberries; they grew abundantly in the swampy, low spots where nothing but swamp cedar seemed to thrive. The settlers used the berries as food and medicine and never wanted for a plentiful supply.

Ship captains were quick to discover the value of cranberries as preventives of scurvy, one of the most dreaded diseases suffered by seafarers; they carried barrels of the berries on their voyages, as part of the regular diet.

Yet it was more than two hundred years before cultivation of the cranberry was undertaken as a commercial enterprise. About ninety-five years ago, in a lot that had been a cedar swamp, Stephen N. Gifford began experimenting to ascertain the practicability of raising cranberries for the commercial market. His bog was near Thomas Alden's Corner, where a large bog is still under cultivation.

One of the first bogs to prove profitable was that

## *Industries and Commerce*

of John S. Loring, who spent much time and money experimenting with growing methods. At about the same time, the Fletcher bog near Church Street began to pay dividends. A third, still in operation near the Duxbury railroad station, was built by Joseph Weston in 1872.

But these men considered their cranberry bogs as mere adjuncts to their farming. Others raised cranberries because they attracted numbers of birds which gave valuable assistance in protecting other crops from pests.

Cultivation for purely commercial purposes has increased slowly. Fifty years ago, the cranberries were picked by hand by the neighbors and their children. The harvest was done in a holiday spirit. Pickers received sixty-four cents a bushel.

During the intervening years, experimentation has been carried on in stations maintained by the Massachusetts State College and the United States Department of Agriculture. The cranberry business has become one in which competition is so keen that a constant search for improved methods of cultivation and marketing is necessary.

The experiments have included the use of bees as pollination agents, and of birds as definite factors in pest control. To encourage the presence of birds, houses and boxes have been erected in the bogs, and their protection of birds has been recognized as a benefit to the community. Certain bogs, therefore, have become bird sanctuaries as well as business enterprises.

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

Today, there are about twenty-five people who operate some six hundred acres of cranberry bogs in Duxbury. These bogs produce an average annual crop of 36,000 bushels, with an estimated value of \$120,000.

Harvesting is done largely by Bravas who use ingeniously designed pronged scoops; these make the berry-gathering much more rapid than was possible in the hand-picking days.

Cranberry growing is the newest of Duxbury commercial enterprises of appreciable scope. The town is located in the largest cranberry-growing county in the world, and is well supplied with low-lying areas of swampy, acid soil which has been found ideal for the cultivation of cranberries. Because there is a growing national market, the cranberry industry may well prove to have been only in its infancy in 1937.

### *Other Industries*

During the ship-building era, castings were made in forges that were operated in conjunction with the shipyards. Both iron and brass were used. Ore for the iron casting was obtained from the peat bogs of the vicinity. Anchors, marline-spikes, brass and iron ship-fittings were among the products of these forges.

In Tinkertown, there were several small shops where tinsmiths made funnels, lamps, lanterns, measuring devices and kitchenware. These little

*Harvesting Cranberries.*





## *Industries and Commerce*

shops were much like the shoe shops, and existed during the same period.

In the 'eighties, the Standard Fertilizer Company operated at the foot of Captain's Hill a "pogie factory" in which the fish were reduced to fertilizer. So great was the controversy over the merits of this plant that it became a subject for discussion at the State House where Duxbury carried its complaints, and at the Duxbury town house where a town meeting, in 1885, finally expressed its approval of the business.

For a brief time wooden pumps were manufactured by individuals who specialized in that work. Carriages, wagons and harness were made, calling for the collective skill of several specialists.

A sample of the excellence of workmanship is the carriage built some fifty years ago for Captain David Cushman. It is now owned by Mrs. Walter Cushman. Ironwork was done by James Vinal, blacksmith; Nelson was the wheelwright. Leather and upholstery was supplied by Joshua W. Swift, harness maker. All three had their shops not far from the Bluefish River bridge.

For many years, outlying sections were served by one or more pedlars who carried their goods in wagons. Their stocks included almost everything from clothing to kitchenware, and from medicines to spectacles. They were tradesmen who had an uncanny understanding of the needs of average families, and of the prices which such families could afford to pay.

### *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

Duxbury is the headquarters of William Clapp, scientist, who has devoted many years to the study of the *Teredo* and other destructive invertebrates. For some years, his laboratory was a schooner tied up to a Boston wharf. He now has perfected methods of protecting timber from hitherto uncontrolled organisms, and markets his preventive service.

### *The Franco-American Cable*

An important forward step in the commercial development of the nation was taken on July 23, 1869, when the cable connecting France with the United States was pulled ashore at Duxbury Beach.

Because of its international significance, the event attracted attention from Europe as well as the United States, and brought once more to Duxbury a fleeting moment of the fame which it had enjoyed during the maritime era. The town took tremendous pride in the fact that it had been selected as the landing place of that unbroken wire running from Brest, France, three thousand three hundred miles along the bed of the ocean to this continent.

In preparation for the formal ceremony celebrating completion of the laying of the cable, Duxbury citizens assembled at a meeting in Cornerstone Lodge, the Masonic headquarters, on July 16, 1869. To arrange and direct "a celebration on this occasion worthy of the ancient renown of the old Pil-

## *Industries and Commerce*

grim town of Duxbury," the citizens designated a committee consisting of Stephen N. Gifford, John S. Loring, Isaac Keen, James Wilde, C. B. Thomas, Allen Prior, Alfred Drew, Walter Thompson, Calvin Pratt, M.D., and Jonathan Ford.

The committee set Tuesday, July 27, as the day upon which the celebration should be held, and selected Abram's Hill as the site. The actual landing of the cable, however, took place some days before the appointed date.

Early on the morning of Friday, July 23, the French cable company's ships, *Chiltern* and *Scandaria*, dropped anchor off Rouse's Hummock and launched sea boats to pay out the final lengths of the cable. A swarm of welcoming small boats hurried out, and spectators immediately began gathering on the shore.

Finally, at five o'clock that afternoon, the sea boat which was towing the end of the cable was beached. Scores of eager hands grasped the heavy rope attached to the cable. Stephen N. Gifford, clerk of the Massachusetts Senate, Collector Thomas Russell of the port of Boston, and other notables who had come to Duxbury on the school ship, *George M. Barnard*, joined sailors, farmers, townspeople and small boys in hauling the cable over the ridge of the beach, across the marsh to the cable house. Cheers rose from the watchers. Guns were fired by the *Chiltern* and the *Scandaria*.

That evening, while Duxbury citizens were being entertained aboard the two vessels, the first message

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

over the new cable announced a rise in cable shares in Paris.

On the following day, Mayor N. B. Shurtleff and a group of aldermen and councilmen of Boston brought to Duxbury the felicitations of their city.

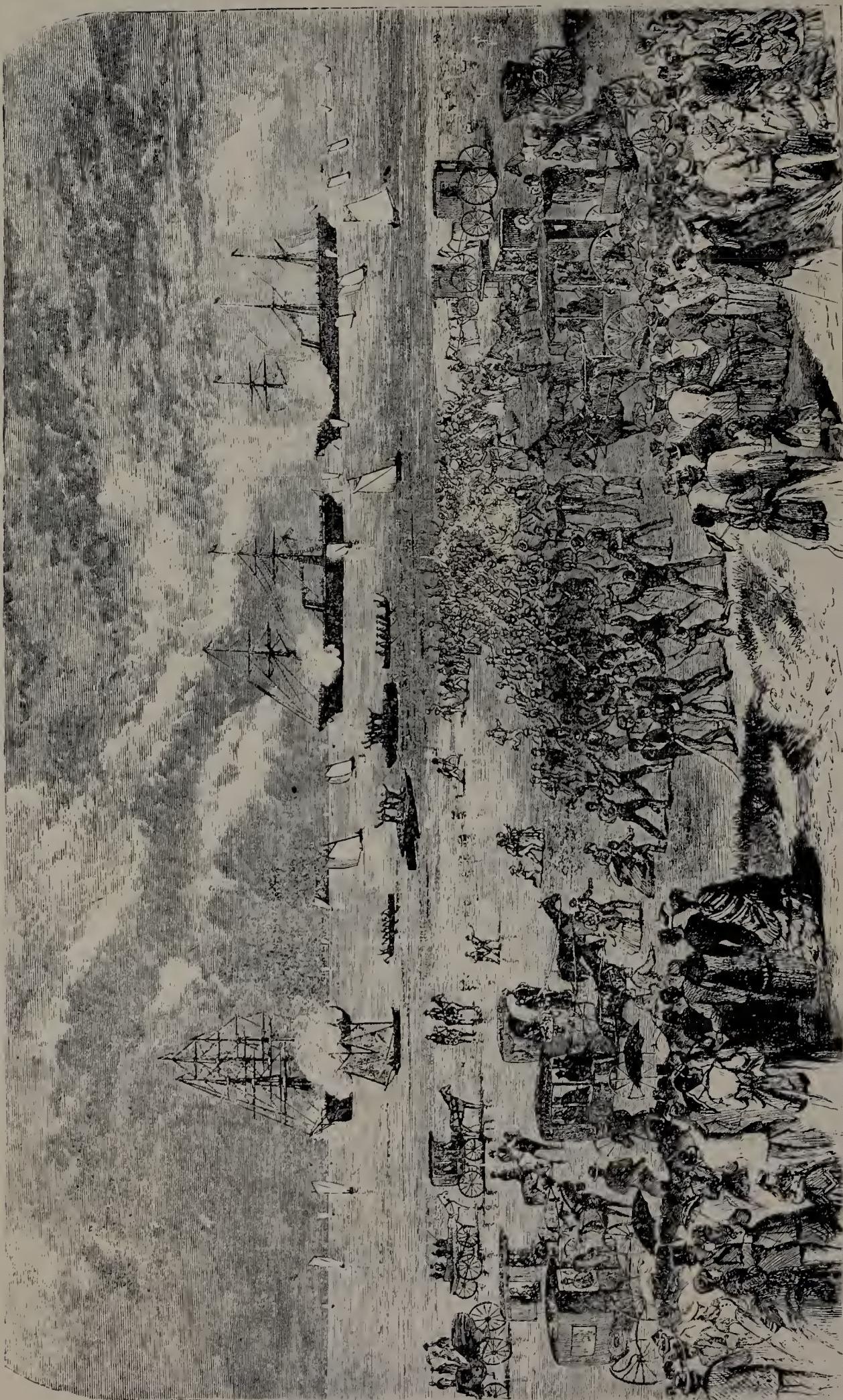
The formal celebration of the completion of the cable took place on Abram's Hill on the following Tuesday, July 27. Boston assisted by having flags flown on her public buildings and by having a salute of one hundred guns fired on Boston Common.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, festivities began in a great tent where tables for six hundred guests had been set. Flags of the United States, France and other European nations added their color to the decorations. The band from Plymouth played.

Outside, twenty-five men of the Second Massachusetts Light Battery, under Lieutenant C. W. Beal, lined up two field pieces to fire a salute when the cable finally should be pulled up to the tent.

Among the company at the banquet were Stephen N. Gifford, president of the day, Mayor N. B. Shurtleff and a delegation of officials representing the city of Boston, Thomas Russell, collector of the port of Boston, George O. Brastow, president of the Massachusetts Senate, accompanied by members of the General Court, Viscount Parker, Lord Sackville Cecil, Sir James Anderson, representing the Franco-American Cable Company, Professor Birtsch, French electrician, Professor Pierce of Harvard





THE FRENCH ATLANTIC CABLE—THE LANDING OF THE SHORE END ON THE BEACH NEAR DUXBURY, MASS., JULY 23RD—THE SALUTE BY THE CABLE FLEET.—From a Sketch by Our Special Artist. 1869.



THE FRENCH ATLANTIC CABLE—VIEW OF THE TOWN OF DUXBURY, ON MASSACHUSETTS BAY, MASS., FROM CAPTAIN'S HILL.—From a Sketch by Our Special Artist



## *Industries and Commerce*

University, Lieutenant Vetch of the Royal Engineers, Edward S. Tobey of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, Messrs. Watson and Brown of the cable company, and other notables of state and nation.

Rev. Josiah Moore, pastor of the Unitarian Church, opened the ceremonies with prayer. After having referred to the recent opening of the Pacific Railroad which had reduced the time required for a transcontinental trip from thirty days to seven days, Stephen N. Gifford said: "Today, we meet to rejoice over the landing of a line that not only has annihilated the space between two continents, but at the same time, if not a guarantee, is at least an earnest, that peace and good will shall forever continue between us and the mighty nations that occupy them. This is . . . a great step in the advancing march of civilization."

Thomas Russell responded to the toast, "The President of the United States"; George O. Brastow, to "The City of Boston"; and C. B. Thomas, who served as toastmaster, replied to the toast, "The Town of Duxbury."

The Plymouth band played the anthems of the respective nations when the assembly rose in response to toasts to "His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of France," to "His Majesty, Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy," and to "Her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland."

Toastmaster Thomas read a note received from the eighty-six-year-old widow of Deacon George Loring, the ship-builder:

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

"In memory of the past generation of ship-masters and ship-builders:

"May the electric spark now kindled so animate the coming generation that it may worthily fill the places of the past, is the wish of an 'Old Settler.' "

In reply, George B. Loring said: "The old ship-masters and ship-builders of Duxbury! What memories do their names awaken! Their lives form a part of that history of this town which makes it a remarkable illustration of the advancement and progress for which this age is distinguished. They gave Duxbury a name in all the great markets of the world, and made it a familiar household word in Antwerp, Hamburg, Liverpool and London . . . in the vigorous periods of commerce. . . .

"I ought not to forget the name of George Loring while I live. And who needs to be reminded here of the Sampsons, that stalwart race whose axes swung the brightest and sharpest, and whose hammers, as they drove the treenails, wakened me at dawn, even in the long summer days? Can we ever forget the name of Frazar . . . and the Smiths, the Drews, the Soules, and Westons—a long list of enterprising and honorable men who gave this town its wealth and distinction in early days . . . ?

"The old ships may be gone; the *Cherokee*, the *Choctaw*, the *Susan Drew*, models, in their day, of the best naval architecture, may have perished; but the good names of their builders and masters still remain, and will remain so long as the commercial

## *Industries and Commerce*

world shall set high value on solid ships and honest merchants."

Charles L. Woodbury replied to the toast, "Science," while Lord Sackville Cecil made gallant response to "The Ladies." The elation of the assemblage was expressed by the declaration of George Frazar: "The seeds of the *Mayflower*, though planted in New England's cold December, have germinated, taken root and flourished, until their fruits are known the world over."

Representing the Boston Chamber of Commerce, Edward S. Tobey brought graphically before the gathering the turn in the commercial tide of the nation and the startling disappearance of American shipping from the sea.

"The traditional history of this ancient town," he said, "shows that it was once foremost, not only in the foreign commerce of the Commonwealth, but of the United States. To speak of the character of the numerous first class ships which have been built here, would be to recall the names of the best mechanics and skilled artisans of the whole country.

"The representatives of foreign nations now present will, I am sure, pardon my American feeling when I state that the American flag does not wave over a solitary steamship which crosses the Atlantic. This fact, humiliating as it is and ought to be to our national pride, is one to which I desire to call the attention of the whole country. Of more than seventy steamships which now ply between

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

New York and Europe, not one is the product of American skill and industry."

Shortly before six o'clock, after twelve hours of hard work under Clerk Gaines of the cable company, fifty hot, weary men finished their task of hauling the cable from the cable house over the marshes, across the channels and up to the banquet tent on Abram's Hill. As men crowded about to seize the rope for the final pull, Lieutenant Beal's detail fired the long-awaited salute.

The sentiment felt by the entire assembly was summed up in the toast to which Sir James Anderson replied: "The French Atlantic Cable; uniting two continents, may it be, for all time, a medium of good will, and the promoter of an international peace as serene and undisturbed as that of the still ocean deeps through which it holds its course."

When the meeting adjourned, it was with the understanding that the assembly should reconvene at the call of the first locomotive whistle to sound from a Duxbury train.

That evening, at the home of George W. Wright, Governor Claflin and others of the guests continued their celebration with speech-making and with dancing to the music of the Germania Band of Boston, thus bringing to a close a day which Sir James Anderson said he would remember as one of the "brightest among the jewels of memory."

The Cable House, as it is still called, is now occupied by the Western Union Telegraph & Cable Company.



*Duxbury Bank Building, 1833-1842. Office of French Atlantic Cable, 1869. Now occupied by  
Western Union Telegraph Co.*



## *Industries and Commerce*

### *The Railroad*

Shortly before the gold rush, when most of the eastern half of the country was seething with excitement over the growth of the railroad systems, Duxbury viewed this mode of transportation calmly.

Duxbury had satisfactory stagecoach lines to Boston in the one direction, and to Kingston in the other. It had packets and direct ship connection with the ports of the United States and the rest of the world. It had a thriving business in shipbuilding, fisheries, manufacturing and coasting. Duxbury could see no reason for believing that a railroad would be of appreciable advantage.

Even when neighboring Kingston, in 1845, was included in the route of the railroad from Boston, ship-minded Duxbury declined to look upon it as a necessity, but rather as a convenience to those who happened to like that mode of travel. And since Kingston was but six miles by stagecoach from Duxbury, those who did want railroad travel could easily obtain it by making the short connecting trip.

The more farsighted minority, however, endeavored to arouse interest in bringing the railroad to Duxbury. In 1846, about six months after the railroad from Kingston to Boston had been opened to traffic, John Hicks, Gershom B. Weston and William H. Sampson were among a group which received a charter to build the *South Shore Railroad*

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

from Braintree through Cohasset, Scituate and Marshfield to Duxbury. But after three years of effort to interest the latter three communities, the promoters decided to bring the railroad only as far as Cohasset.

In 1847, another group which included Samuel Stetson, Rev. Josiah Moore and Samuel Knowles received from the state a charter to build the *Duxbury Branch Railroad* northward from Kingston to Duxbury, to ". . . some point between the house of Solomon Washburn and Andrew Stetson's shop. . . ." Lack of support caused this plan also to be abandoned.

The United States was still a maritime nation. Duxbury, therefore, was content to continue to rely on the sea for its chief source of income. It was not until the economic tide began to turn westward at the expense of the maritime interests, that the majority of the people of Duxbury began to give serious thought to the need for railroad service.

In 1861 and again in 1866, companies were formed to build a horse-car line along the highway from Duxbury to Kingston. Stephen N. Gifford, Joshua W. Swift and John S. Loring headed the *Duxbury Railroad Company* which first advocated this plan. Mr. Gifford, Harvey Soule and Gershom B. Weston headed the second group, the *Duxbury Street Railroad Company*. The horse-car did not impress the people as a satisfactory solution to the railroad problem; and, therefore, both charters were permitted to lapse.

## *Industries and Commerce*

The indefatigable Stephen N. Gifford was again among the leaders of a group which received a charter, in 1867, to construct the *Duxbury and Cohasset Railroad* from the Cohasset terminus of the *South Shore Railroad* to South Duxbury. The incorporators included Joseph G. Cole, Amherst A. Fazar, Samuel Hall, Bailey Loring and Nathan Whitney. The towns of Scituate, Marshfield and Duxbury each agreed to subscribe \$75,000 for capital stock.

Ground was broken at the Cohasset end of the proposed route on December 17, 1870; and on June 15, 1871, the railroad was opened for service as far as Greenbush in North Scituate. The remainder of the seventeen mile road to South Duxbury was opened to traffic on August 17, 1871.

The work had been so rushed that it had been none too well done. As a result, the roadbed was not firm through the sections of swampy land. When the first train, filled with guests, made its triumphant journey over the new line, the engineers were dubious as to the safety of the passengers through these swampy stretches. At one point where the roadbed had sagged, the guests were requested to leave the train and to walk along the right of way until the train could again pick them up when it reached more solid ground.

From South Duxbury, the line was continued to Kingston and opened for business on January 22, 1874.

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

Authority to complete the railroad had been won only after sharp debate in Duxbury town meetings. Captain Henry B. Maglathlin was one of the leaders in opposition to the appropriation of town funds for the purchase of capital stock, and one of the most insistent in the belief that the railroad never would prove to be a paying investment. Though he was in the minority, Captain Maglathlin's judgment was vindicated by subsequent developments.

During its brief period of operation as an independent line, the *Duxbury and Cohasset Railroad* was operated at a loss of \$20,000. Constructed at a cost of approximately \$450,000, it was sold in 1878 to the *Old Colony Railroad Company* for \$15,000. This sale was made possible by the town's impatience with the continuing operating deficit, and the consequent desire to "unload" the responsibility of further operation. Once the sale had been consummated, the town then proceeded to liquidate its railroad debt to the state by annual payments for a period of several years.

As an independent investment, the \$75,000 subscribed by Duxbury never paid dividends. But, indirectly, the town profited, not by attracting manufacturing interests as had been hoped, but by opening Duxbury to summer residents. The summer people have added much to the taxable property of the town, have contributed generously to the town's civic and charitable enterprises and have given wide publicity to its advantages, not only

### *Industries and Commerce*

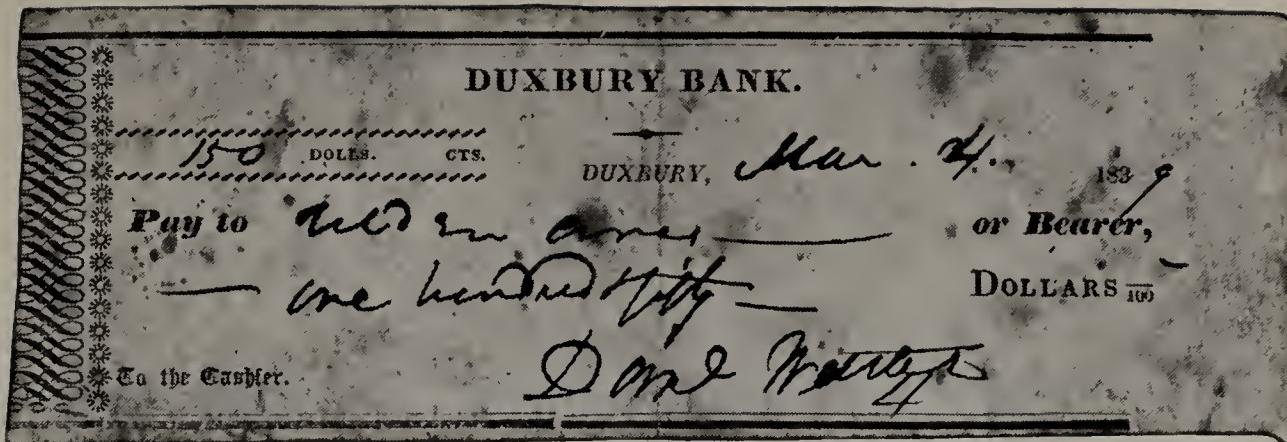
as a summer resort, but as an all-year place of residence.

The railroad is now operated as the "Old Colony Branch" of the *New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company*.



## CIVIC AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES





Check drawn by Daniel Webster on the Duxbury Bank.  
(1833-1842)



## CIVIC AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES

THE year 1837, when the third century in the corporate life of Duxbury began, found the nation struggling with an economic depression which brought distress to a great majority of the people. As the century closes, an economic depression again is causing deep concern.

During both crises, Duxbury found relief in the sea. The clam industry has lightened the burden of Duxbury citizens during the present depression; shipping shielded the town from the distress suffered by most communities one hundred years ago.

In one of the many discussions of the conditions of money and business and the underlying causes for the economic disturbance, Daniel Webster, on August 19, 1840, told a great meeting at Saratoga, New York, of the manner in which Duxbury, a typical shipping port of that time, solved the problem of unsound money. After having described the suffering caused to most Americans, he said:

"There is . . . another class of our fellow-citizens, wealthy men, who have prospered during the last year; and they have prospered where nobody

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else has. I mean the owners of shipping. What is the reason? . . . The shipping of the country carries on the trade, the larger vessels being largely in the foreign trade. Now, why have these men been successful? I will answer by citing an example.

"I live on the sea coast of New England; and one of my neighbors is the largest ship-owner in the United States.<sup>1</sup> During the past year, he has made what might suffice for two or three fortunes of moderate size. How has he made it? He sends his ships to Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, to take freight of cotton. This staple, whatever may be the price abroad, cannot be suffered to rot at home; and, therefore, it is shipped.

"My friend tells his captain to provision his ship at Natchez, for instance, where he buys flour and stores in the currency of that region, which is so depreciated that he is able to sell his bills on Boston at forty-nine per cent premium.

"Here, at once, it will be seen, he gets provision for half-price, because prices do not always rise suddenly as money depreciates. He delivers his freight in Europe, and gets paid for it in good money. The disordered currency of the country to which he belongs does not follow and afflict him abroad. He gets his payment in good money, places it in the hands of his owner's banker, who again draws at a premium for it. The ship-owner, then, makes money, when all others are suffering, because

<sup>1</sup> Ezra Weston of Duxbury.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

To Judah Alden Esq;

We Reposing official trust and confidence in your patriotism, valour, conduct and fidelity, do by these presents  
confidant and affiant grant unto you, Captain Judah Alden, and his successors (legitimately) in the  
in the service of the United States, to take rank as such a  
day of January, 1782, you are therefore, and fully and diligently to discharge the duty of  
by no means, per or among all manner of things, the recent belonging. And we do  
and Officers and Agents under your command, to be obedient to your orders, ac  
to observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to  
time, as you are to receive and follow. And you are  
of the United States, or Committee of Safety, or  
of the Committee of Safety, or Committee in chief for the time being, of the Army of the  
proposed appointed, a Committee of the States, or  
United States, and other your Honor Officers according to the rule and discipline of War, in such and  
the most report in you. This Commission to continue in force until revoked by this, or a future Congress  
the Committee of Safety before mentioned, or a Committee of the States.

Witnessed at the City of Philadelphia, on the day of January, 1782,  
the Congress of the United States of America at Philadelphia, — the  
sixth instant, — day of January, 1782. A. D. 1782 and in the year of our Lord  
Year of our Independence.

John Hanson

By Order of Congress

Adjutant General  
Secretary at War.

Captain's commission issued to Judah Alden, 1782, by Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary of War. (From the collection of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society.)



## *Civic and Military Activities*

he can escape from the influence of the bad laws and the bad currency of his own country."

At the time when Webster made his speech at Saratoga, the nation was still young — only sixty-four years old — and correspondingly inexperienced and unstable. Duxbury, on the other hand, had been an incorporated town for more than two hundred years; the town was one hundred thirty-nine years old when the Declaration of Independence was read. The experience and stability accumulated during that period proved to be a powerful weapon with which to strike at the depression.

The youth of the nation is emphasized when it is pointed out that in 1840, in Duxbury alone, there were eighteen men who received pensions for having served in the War of the Revolution, and thirteen widows of veterans of that war.

The men were Isaiah Alden, Judah Alden, Edward Arnold, Joshua Brewster, Howard Chandler, Thomas Chandler, Reuben Dawes, Jephtha Delano, Oliver Delano, Samuel Gardner, Nathaniel Hodges, Joseph Kinney, Abner Sampson, Andrew Sampson, Seth Sprague, Uriah Sprague, James Weston and Levi Weston.

The houses which stood on the streets of Duxbury at that time were old houses, many of them dating from the seventeenth century. In outward appearance, Duxbury of 1837 was not greatly different from the Duxbury of today — except, of course, along the waterfront where the shipyards

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

were then booming and the vessels of the merchant fleet swung at anchor.

Colonial houses of seventeenth and eighteenth century architecture line the older highways as they did one hundred years ago. Some of the houses there now, were standing then; houses built sturdily by the same men who built vessels to withstand the buffeting of wind and waves; houses built in just such a solid manner as an old time sea captain might logically be expected to insist upon.

In spite of the absence of ordinances to compel it, most Duxbury citizens have endeavored to make the architecture of the newer houses conform to that of the fine old residences of ship-building days. With few exceptions, the summer residents have shown similar good taste and civic interest. The result is that Duxbury, to a degree that is almost unique, retains the atmosphere of quiet, dignified stability which typified the people who founded and developed the town.

A second feature of Duxbury's outward appearance is its neatness. The town comes honestly by that. Pilgrim law required that housekeepers should be orderly; and the law was enforced. On one occasion, Captain Myles Standish and John Alden made the long trip to Sandwich to verify the alarming charges of disorderly housekeeping made against two bachelors. The officers not only found the charge to be justified, but arrested the men and took them before the court for punishment for "disorderly keeping house alone."



E. C. Turner, Photographer  
*Typical Duxbury captain's home. Now occupied by Judge A. C. Beane.*



## *Civic and Military Activities*

During the peak of the ship-building prosperity, Justin Winsor, a freshman at Harvard College, checked and rechecked the many legends that had been handed down from generation to generation, studied moldering old records of early Duxbury, and in 1849 published his *History of Duxbury*, which is still regarded as authoritative.

The work of young Winsor was of particular value because little attention had been paid to the preservation of records. Not until 1853 did the town of Duxbury print the annual reports of the town officers. The memories of old residents, carefully preserved letters and personal memoirs were, as often as not, depended upon to furnish information concerning the past.

For the first half of the nineteenth century, Duxbury was too much engrossed in its shipping to be disturbed by the disputes which troubled other sections of the nation. But the threat of secession by the South aroused the town.

Nothing has ever stirred Duxbury more deeply than did the dispute over slavery. Abolitionists found receptive hearers in the town. And one of Duxbury's most esteemed citizens, Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, played a leading role in advancing the Abolitionist cause. She was one of the vigorous group that surrounded William Lloyd Garrison in arousing the popular passions against the practice of slavery.

The fervor with which the citizens opposed slavery is indicated by the temper of the resolutions

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

passed at a meeting held in the town house, March 13, 1854, at the time when the Congress had before it a bill to open to slavery the territory north of the Mason and Dixon line.

Addressed to the Congress, the resolutions read in part:

"Resolved that as firm and unwavering friends of the Union, lovers of liberty and equal rights of mankind, and the uncompromising and unconquerable enemies of slavery, we should prove treacherous and recreant to the great and sublime principles of the Declaration of Independence . . . and to the professed principles of the Constitution . . . should we suffer ourselves to . . . fail to raise our voices, however feeble those voices may be, when a base and wicked attempt is being made to open new territory to the blasting and withering curse of slavery. . . .

"Resolved that in our judgment, Congress is invested with free power under the Constitution to preserve and protect all territory within its jurisdiction from the polluting stain of slavery, and that the just and equitable rights of the North, the principles of a common humanity and the dictates of religion alike call upon and justify us in requesting them to exercise this power to preserve and secure all present and future acquired territory free, and consecrate it to freedom, that the foul and demoralizing influence of slavery may never pollute and curse another inch of American soil, thereby removing one of the greatest objections and obstacles, and offering an honorable inducement to the enterprising and hardy sons and daughters of the North to emigrate thither and there sow the seeds of the religious, civil, literary and common school institutions which characterize and distinguish New England, whose enterprise and industry will, we have no reason to doubt, in process of time, if the corrupting and deadly malaria of slavery be not permitted and legalized there to fill the air with its foul and polluting breath, cause

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the now uninhabited region many portions of which possess naturally a fertile and luxurious soil, as it has the hard, cold and barren hills of New England to smile and blossom as the rose;

"Resolved that this resolution be placed upon the town records and that a copy be signed by the selectmen of Duxbury, certified by the town clerk, and transmitted to the Hon. Samuel L. Crocker, the member of Congress from this Congressional district."

As the breach between the North and the South was widened by the rise of passions, and the question of how to solve the problem of slavery was subordinated to the dispute as to which side must yield to the other, so the anti-slavery sentiment in Duxbury deepened.

Duxbury men were members of the first regiment to leave Massachusetts for Washington, only two days after the epochal firing on Fort Sumter, on April 12, 1861.

During the early half of that summer, the town took active steps to fill its quota of enlistments. On May first, in compliance with general orders issued by Governor John A. Andrew, the citizens in town meeting voted to appropriate four thousand dollars to equip and maintain a company of volunteers. In addition to his pay from the federal government, each volunteer was promised fifteen dollars a month for the duration of his enlistment. Conversion of the town's thirty-seven shares of stock in the New England and Merchants Bank into cash as needed was authorized.

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George Lowden was moderator of the town meeting that took this action. The selectmen were John Holmes, Elbridge Chandler and Samuel Atwell. Josiah Peterson was town clerk, and Eben S. Sampson was treasurer and collector.

In the preamble to resolutions urging vigorous prosecution of the war, Gershom B. Weston expressed sentiments that reflected the attitude which prevailed in the town at that time; he advocated stern measures to save the government from ". . . a traitorous, rebellious, domestic foe who have . . . torn down the glorious stars and stripes . . . and threatened to raise . . . the black piratical flag of a despotic southern confederacy, founded upon the system of chattel slavery . . ."

Duxbury men enlisted readily. Companies of men from Marshfield and Duxbury were united with others to form the Twelfth Massachusetts Regiment, commanded by Colonel Fletcher Webster of Marshfield, son of Daniel Webster. After a brief stay at Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, the regiment left for the front on July 23, 1861. During the second battle at Bull Run, Colonel Webster was fatally wounded, and is said to have been carried back to a dressing station by an unnamed Duxbury volunteer.

On July 24, 1862, to fill Duxbury's quota of thirty-two men, in response to a call for fifteen thousand replacements and additional enlistments from the state, the town voted to pay one hundred

## *Civic and Military Activities*

dollars "bounty" for each Duxbury volunteer. The selectmen acted as recruiting officers.

In accordance with resolutions presented by Henry Wadsworth and others, the town voted on August 26, 1862, to pay the one hundred dollars bounty also to Duxbury members of Company E, Fourth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, under Captain Henry B. Maglathlin, then encamped at Dedham. Each new man who would enlist before September 10, for a nine months period, was offered the bounty as an inducement.

The cost of the war began to make itself felt in a grimly dramatic manner when a committee consisting of Peleg Cook, Gershon B. Weston and Stephen N. Gifford was selected to arrange for the return of the bodies of Duxbury men who had died in service, "that they may be deposited in the burying ground of their fathers, and their dust mingle with theirs."

During the remainder of the war, Duxbury pressed every effort to fulfill its quota of the obligations of the state. The town paid one hundred twenty-five dollars to each man who enlisted in response to the calls of October 17, 1863, and February 1, 1864; and in 1864, it raised by assessment some three thousand eight hundred dollars to repay individuals who had advanced some of the cash for the bounties.

In March, 1864, George W. Ford, Gershon B. Weston and Samuel Loring were designated a com-

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mittee to select a site for erection of a monument to the Duxbury war dead. Eventually, the monument was placed in Mayflower Cemetery.

Though the price of the war was constantly becoming more frightful, the town did not lose any of its zeal for prosecuting it to a successful conclusion. At the meeting of June 4, 1864, it was voted to raise funds for the purpose of "recruiting its (the town's) proportion of the quota of volunteers or towards buying men to fill said quota in the military service of the United States that may be hereafter called for . . . provided that the amount so appropriated shall not exceed the sum of \$125 per man."

According to the town records of 1864, twenty-two men who enlisted for one year were paid one hundred dollars each; sixty-two who volunteered for an enlistment of three years received one hundred twenty-five dollars. Up to February, 1865, the state paid four thousand eight hundred dollars to aid families of Duxbury volunteers.

Of the two hundred thirty-six Duxbury men who enlisted in the Union forces during the course of the war, thirty-five were listed by Henry Barstow, a veteran of the war, as having died in service. They were: Charles E. Alden, William Bailey, James H. Bowen, Edward Bishop, Joshua T. Brewster, George Bryant, Charles J. Chandler, David F. Church, Stephen Clark, John H. Crocker, Daniel W. Delano, Oscar Delano, Francis B. Dorr, Harrison T. Glass, Seth Glass, William J. Keep, Abel T.

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Lewis, Henry B. Paulding, Walter Peterson, Daniel Rix, Bradford Sampson, Eden Sampson, George B. Sampson, Daniel J. Simmons, Joseph E. Simmons, Wilbur F. Simmons, Aaron Snell, Aurelius Soule, William Soule, John Southworth, Elisha Swift, William Wadsworth, James H. Weston, Walter Weston, and Gershon Winsor.

Almost twenty years after the close of the war between the states, Captain S. B. Beaman, assisted by Dr. Benjamin A. Sawyer and George F. Ryder, began soliciting enrolments for a proposed Duxbury post of the Grand Army of the Republic. On May sixth, after twenty-three men had been enrolled, Captain Beaman applied to John D. Billings, commander of the Department of Massachusetts, G.A.R., for a post charter.

On May 19, 1885, under the direction of Department Inspector Stephen A. Cushing and Chief Mustering Officer George H. Bonney, Jr., of Martha Sever Post, Number 154, G.A.R., of Kingston, the William Wadsworth Post, Number 165, was officially formed. The first officers elected were:

*Commander*, Benjamin A. Sawyer

*Senior Vice Commander*, J. T. Turner

*Junior Vice Commander*, J. K. Burgess, Jr.

*Surgeon*, Thomas Gridley

*Chaplain*, George L. Higgins

*Officer of the Day*, John W. Tower

*Officer of the Guard*, George F. Ryder

*Quartermaster*, LeBaron Goodwin

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*Adjutant, Henry Barstow*

*Sergeant major, C. W. Hunt*

*Quartermaster sergeant, Lebbeus Harris*

On Memorial Day of that year, the newly organized post held its first memorial service. It decorated forty-one graves and held services in the Unitarian Church and at the soldiers and sailors monument in Mayflower Cemetery. The town had appropriated its first contribution to such services—twenty-five dollars—to be used in event a post should be formed before Memorial Day.

At the meeting of June 13, Laurence Bradford was mustered in, the first man to be enrolled after the issue of the charter to the charter members. He presented a Bible to the post for its altar.

The year 1894 was important in the history of William Wadsworth Post. In that year, while the cadets of Partridge Academy participated in their ceremonies, members of the post decorated for the first time, the long-lost grave of Myles Standish. The Gershom Witherell barn was remodeled into Grand Army Hall and dedicated as the regular post headquarters on October 5, 1894.

On April 5, 1895, the Myles Standish Camp, Sons of Veterans, was formally organized. Little by little, the Sons of Veterans assumed the duties that were laid gradually aside by the aging members of the Wadsworth post; and finally, February 5, 1915, the surviving men of the post asked the younger organization to relieve them of even

## *Civic and Military Activities*

the responsibility of conducting the Memorial Day observances.

Just ten years later—on November 6, 1925—the little group of surviving members of the post gave to the younger group the G.A.R. Hall and its fittings. The ranks of the old men had been so thinned by death that they recognized that there was no longer need for quarters; and the burden of the accumulating years had become so great that the surviving men wished to be relieved of the responsibilities entailed in the maintenance of a building.

Eighty-eight men had been enrolled in William Wadsworth Post. They included Lewis B. Abbott, Henry Alden, John Alden, John W. Alden, Thomas Alden, Edwin Atwell, George H. Bailey, Lewis M. Bailey, Henry Barstow, Samuel B. Beaman, Alphonse Bowin, John R. Bradley, Laurence Bradford, Melzar Brewster, James K. Burgess, Benjamin G. Cahoon, William B. Campbell, Hiram O. Chandler, E. Edgar Chandler, Julius B. Chandler, Waldo Church, Charles J. Cox, Frederic O. Crocker, George P. Cushman, Otis Delano, Nathan Dorr, Hiram Foster, James Downey, Alfred Fowler, Enoch Freeman, LeBaron Goodwin, Albert M. Goulding, Thomas Gridley, Lebbeus Harris, John H. Haverstock, George L. Higgins, Charles W. Hunt, William F. Hunt, John E. Josselyn, Nathan Keen, James H. Killian, Rodney M. Leach, Henry H. Lewis, Joseph H. Mack, Thomas T. McNaught, Stephen S. Peterson, Leander B. Pierce, Charles

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R. M. Pratt, Frederick A. Pratt, Barden H. Prouty, Charles A. Rodgers, George F. Ryder, Gilbert M. Ryder, Edward Sampson, Isaac L. Sampson, Benjamin A. Sawyer, George W. W. Scott, Frederic P. Sherman, Joseph Sherman, Gideon Shurtleff, Joseph A. Soule, Marcellus Soule, Oscar H. Soule, Samuel P. Soule, Albert M. Thayer, Ira S. Thomas, William H. Thomas, Charles Tolman, William H. Tolman, George H. Torrey, John W. Tower, John F. Turner, Hamilton Wadsworth, Jabez P. Weston, James S. Weston, Charles T. Whitney, Henry O. Winsor, James H. Winsor, William Woodward, William J. Wright.

Of these men, but four were living when Commander James Burgess called the last post meeting at his home on May 4, 1928. E. J. Sweetser, James Downey and Albert M. Goulding attended that last meeting. Parker B. Chandler of the Sons of Veterans, for some time had been acting as secretary of the post.

In January, 1929, Mr. Burgess died. Mr. Sweetser and Mr. Downey died in 1933, leaving Mr. Goulding the last living member of the once vigorous blue clad host who tramped bravely away in response to the call of Abraham Lincoln.

Comrade Goulding, who had served fourteen years as commander of William Wadsworth Post, died in February, 1935. On February 27, final honors were given him at the Unitarian Church. Participating in the funeral services were Thomas Ellis of East Boston Post, G.A.R., Harvey J. Rey-

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nolds of the Indian War Veterans, members of the Myles Standish Camp, Sons of Veterans, who conducted a ritualistic service, the American Legion, and auxiliary groups of both organizations. Rev. Ernest Thomas was the presiding clergyman. Richard S. Glover was the bugler who played "Taps" at the grave of the last of Duxbury's two hundred thirty-six "boys in blue," seventy-four years after the first of them had been called to the colors.

The remaining patriotic organizations continue the annual observance of Memorial Day at the Duxbury cemeteries and at Bluefish River Bridge, where flowers dedicated to the sailor dead are strewn on the water.

The Sons of Union Veterans and the Duxbury Post, Number 223, American Legion, take charge of the ceremonies, assisted by their auxiliaries, by details from the National Sailors' Home and the local troops of Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. The graves which they decorate run the whole gamut of military history in Duxbury, from the first military commander, Myles Standish, to veterans of the World War.

After the close of the Civil War, the town turned again to the normal activities of commerce and industry.

There was much talk of bringing the cable from France to the Duxbury shore. Then, to the intense satisfaction of the townspeople, the talk developed into a definite plan. At the town meet-

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ing of September 17, 1868, it was voted, on the motion of Stephen N. Gifford, "that the selectmen be authorized to sell and convey to the Atlantic Telegraph Company all rights and title the town has in Rouse's Hummock, on such terms and conditions as shall seem equitable and just to all parties concerned."

The landing of the cable took place in the following year, marking a drastic reduction of the barriers between this nation and Europe.

At about this same time, a struggle was taking place between those who wished to erect on Captain's Hill a monument to Captain Myles Standish, and those who opposed the proposal. Charges and countercharges featured the debates.

At the town meeting of May 18, 1872, it was voted ". . . that the thanks of the town are due George Bradford, Stephen N. Gifford, Stephen M. Allen, John S. Loring and the selectmen, together with Josiah Peterson, our representative, for their successful efforts in obtaining a charter for the Standish Monument, against the unjust and jealous opposition of the enemies of the town and its public improvements; that we have full confidence, not only in the character and ability, but in the entire disinterestedness of the officials and members of the association who are active in securing the erection of the monument upon Captain's Hill, as the proper and most fitting place for the memorial for the honor of the sterling character of the Pilgrim captain, as well as for the benefit of the town, and as a point of





## *Town of Duxbury in 1879*



## *Village of Duxbury in 1879*



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observation for navigators along the coast for vessels entering Plymouth or Massachusetts Bays.

"That as a town we earnestly invite the co-operation of the citizens of New England and the United States to join in aiding us in the erection of this memorial to the memory of Captain Myles Standish, the first and earliest long-tried captain of the military forces of the New World."

When it was completed, the monument which commands one of the most impressive views to be found anywhere, was placed in the care of the Standish Monument Association.

The town turned also to assisting the Ladies' Monument Association in erecting in Mayflower Cemetery a memorial to the men who had died in service. At the town meeting of May 14, 1870, it was voted ". . . to bear the balance of the expenses of the soldiers' monument, to finish grading the lot, providing the means of the Duxbury Ladies' Monument Association should prove insufficient, the sum to be expended by the town not to exceed \$250. . . ."

The memorial monument now standing in Mayflower Cemetery resulted from this co-operative action between the association and the town.

The period between that time and 1886 was marked by the completion of the *Duxbury & Cohasset Railroad* through Duxbury, and the consequent opening of the town to its first substantial number of summer vacationists.

In 1886, Laurence Bradford was designated by

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

the town to assemble a committee of his own choosing for the purpose of deciding whether to celebrate the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the town. At the annual town meeting of April 4, 1887, the celebration was decided upon, and a committee selected to make and execute plans for the occasion. Members of the committee included Laurence Bradford, chairman, William J. Alden, Jr., George Bradford, Benjamin G. Cahoon, Josephus Dawes, LeBaron Goodwin, Samuel Loring, Frederick N. Knapp, Levi P. Simmons, Hambleton E. Smith, Joshua W. Swift, William J. Wright, John B. Hollis, Jr., Josiah Peterson, Albert M. Thayer and John W. Tower.

The celebration was held on June 17, 1887, a date set by the annual town meeting in April of that year. June 17, it will be recalled, was the exact date of the original incorporation of Duxbury as an independent town.

William J. Wright was chosen president of the day. Justin Winsor, then librarian of Harvard College, was invited to be the orator of the day.

Under clear skies, Grand Army posts from Duxbury, Kingston and Plymouth assembled on June seventeenth at the South Duxbury railroad station, and marched to Soule's corner for a review. The American Band of South Weymouth supplied martial music.

At 10.30 that morning, the celebration committee and the various fraternal and patriotic organizations received Governor Oliver Ames and a party

## *Civic and Military Activities*

of notables at the Duxbury railroad station. The Governor's salute of seventeen guns was fired.

Then, while the townspeople and visitors from surrounding communities lined the usually quiet streets, the entire assemblage paraded through Hall's Corner, Washington Street and St. George Street to the grounds near the home of George W. Wright.

At the head of the procession rode Chief Marshal James Downey, accompanied by his aides, Samuel Atwell, Jr., James H. Killian, John H. Haverstock, and George B. Wright. The Silver Fife and Drum Corps of Plymouth, and Collingwood Post, Number 76, G.A.R., of Plymouth, commanded by A. O. Brown, preceded the carriages in which rode the president of the day, William J. Wright, and the invited guests—Governor Ames and his staff; Justin Winsor, H. J. Boardman, president of the Massachusetts Senate, Charles J. Noyes, speaker of the House of Representatives, Adjutant-General Samuel Dalton, Henry B. Pierce, secretary of the Commonwealth, George B. Loring, John D. Long, Mel- len Chamberlain, librarian of the Boston Public Library; William T. David, Benjamin W. Harris, Stephen M. Allen, Charles Levi Woodbury, Rev. Frederick N. Knapp, Rev. George M. Bodge, Captain J. B. G. Adams, sergeant at arms; L. Myles Standish, and Charles Deane.

The American Band of South Weymouth set the beat for the members of Duxbury's William Wadsworth Post, Number 165, G.A.R., commanded by

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John W. Tower, and the Martha Sever Post, Number 154, of Kingston, commanded by George E. Owens. Gaily uniformed bands from Plymouth and Randolph led the way for four lodges of Odd Fellows—Grand Canton Bunker Hill of Charlestown, headed by Major E. W. Brown, Sagamore Encampment, Number 54, of Plymouth, commanded by Major S. H. Doten, and the Adams Lodge and Mattakeeset Lodge of Kingston and Duxbury respectively.

Citizens comprised the last division of the parade.

In a huge tent on the grounds of George W. Wright, the formal exercises were held in the presence of a capacity throng. William J. Wright introduced Rev. Frederick N. Knapp of Plymouth who offered prayer. To the tune of "Duke Street," the assembly sang the anniversary hymn which had been written by Rev. George M. Bodge, pastor of the First Church of Duxbury.

In his oration, Justin Winsor described the problems of the Pilgrims from the time of their landing from the *Mayflower* to their appearance before the Court to argue for separation from the parent town and church of Plymouth, and of their beginning of the settlement of Duxbury as an independent town.

Governor Ames brought the greetings of the State, and the celebration was concluded with festivities in various homes of the town.

The year 1889 was notable for two particular reasons—the beginning of the effort to develop Duxbury Beach and the building of the Free Li-





*Gathering of elderly people. Duxbury, August 7, 8, 9, 1900.*

Photograph of Elderly People at Loan Exhibit  
held in Duxbury, Aug. 7, 8, 9, 1900.

Taken in front of Brooks house, on Point road which leads to Alden Weston's

On the left	Mrs. Deborah Hunt	aged 84	Died Feb. 6, 1904
Next	Miss Edith Delano } her sister	92	" 1903
"	Miss Caroline W. Bradford	89	" March 1904
"	Mrs. Eden Winsor Soule	94	" 1903
bt. Mrs. Winsor & Mrs. Chandler	Mrs. Eaton, summer resident		
" in front	Mrs. Abigail Chandler	81	
"	Mrs. Betsey Hammond	86	" Feb. 26, 1904
"	Mr. John Hathaway	82	" April 30, 1902
"	Miss Sophronia Peterson } or Bosworth	"	1903
"	Mr. Thomas Hathaway	84	" April 26, 1902
" at end	Mr. Silvanus Smith	83	" July 1901
Standing back of Moses T. J. Hathaway	Mrs. Horace Soule		
Next	Mr. Charles Stetson } son of Andrew bro. of Sylvia Church father " Mr. Roy Parker }		
Next	Mrs. Silvanus Smith (Judith W.)	78 yrs 9 mos	
In back line	Mrs. Lucia A. Knapp of Plymouth		
	Mrs. Bartlett "		
next to Mrs. Knapp and Mrs. Smith	Mrs. Maria F. Sampson	died	

On the piazza at } Mrs. Frederic B. Knapp  
right }

Mrs. Charles F. Stetson  
Mrs. L. Granville Sampson  
Mrs. Mayee S. Sampson  
Mrs. Ella Soule

Jemima Hathaway is standing and others  
near Mrs. Stetson on the ground

Daniel Webster's Family Coach, owned by Mr. Walton Hall  
owner of Webster Place, with his coachman and  
Lucas Soule standing near. The coach was  
loaned to bring these elderly ladies to the Loan  
Exhibit. Footman Frank Friend, <sup>an Institute of Technology</sup> student, of Duxbury.

above adapted from list made by Mrs. Ruth A. Bradford.



## *Civic and Military Activities*

brary. William J. Wright was the chief proponent of the beach development. He sold building lots and urged the building of homes on the beach. The town expended money for building the roadways necessary to these proposed new buildings.

Through the generosity of Henry Winsor of Philadelphia who made a gift of five thousand dollars for a free library in Duxbury, and of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Wright, who, in memory of their son George B. Wright, gave to the Winsor trustees the lot and present building, equipped, furnished and partially supplied with books, the town achieved a long-coveted ambition.

The appreciation of the town was expressed in an unanimous vote passed at the town meeting of April 1, 1889: "Resolved, that the Town of Duxbury in town meeting assembled, would extend a hearty vote of thanks to Henry Winsor of Philadelphia for his generous gift of \$5000 for a free library for the benefit of Duxbury, and that the town clerk be requested to forward to him a copy of this vote." At the next meeting after the announcement of the gift by the Wrights, the formal thanks of the town were given.

In 1892, an additional three thousand dollars was made available to the library when the town voted to transfer to the library trustees a bequest received from the estate of Henry Hathaway.

A work of historic value was performed in 1892 when, at the order of the town, George Etheridge copied and had printed and bound three hundred

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

copies of town records dating from 1642 to 1770. The records were of necessity incomplete, for fire had destroyed many of them during the days when they were kept in the homes of the town clerks.

A jubilant note suggestive of the enthusiasm of chambers of commerce was recorded by George H. Stearns, town clerk, in his annual report: "There were living in Duxbury on the first day of January, 1892, eighty-three persons over eighty years of age—forty-four men and thirty-nine women. Six of these were over ninety, and one was over one hundred years of age. We think this is a pretty good showing for a town of 1900 inhabitants."

In the meantime, repeated severe storms had been causing continuous damage on Duxbury Beach, prompting the selectmen to demand that the United States government take steps to repair the damage and perform such construction as would prevent further damage. But the government declined to undertake the task. The town wisely refused to build the roads which had once been authorized. At the meeting of March 5, 1894, it voted: ". . . that the town deems it inexpedient to make, at this time, an appropriation for building a road on the back side of the beach, from the bridge to the High Pines."

The great storm of 1898 in which the steamer *Portland*, which plied between Boston and Portland, Maine, was sunk with all on board, caused such havoc on Duxbury Beach that the plans for building homes there was abandoned.

## *Civic and Military Activities*

The official seal of the Town of Duxbury first appeared on the town reports in 1901. Under the direction of the selectmen, a competition had been held. The design submitted by Laurence Bradford, featuring Captain Myles Standish in military dress, had been selected as the best and had been adopted as the official seal of the town.

The Australian ballot for town officers was used in Duxbury for the first time in 1903, in accordance with a favorable vote of one hundred twelve in favor, as opposed to ten votes against.

In 1906 and 1907, there was much debate over methods and equipment for fire-fighting. Finally, an appropriation of eight hundred dollars was made for the construction and equipment of a house for "Engine 2" near Hall's Corner. Though the plans were not satisfactory to everybody, they were at least an improvement over the requirements of 1636, that each householder should have ". . . one sufficient ladder or ladders, at least, which will reach ye top of the dwelling."

The town was given the old library building in St. George Street in 1907; and since that time it has been used as the town offices. For her gift of a new library building, the town, at its annual meeting on March 7, 1910, passed resolutions thanking Mrs. Georgianna B. Wright.

Women's suffrage was a moot question in 1915. At the state election on November second of that year, Duxbury voted overwhelmingly against giving the franchise to women—two hundred eighteen to

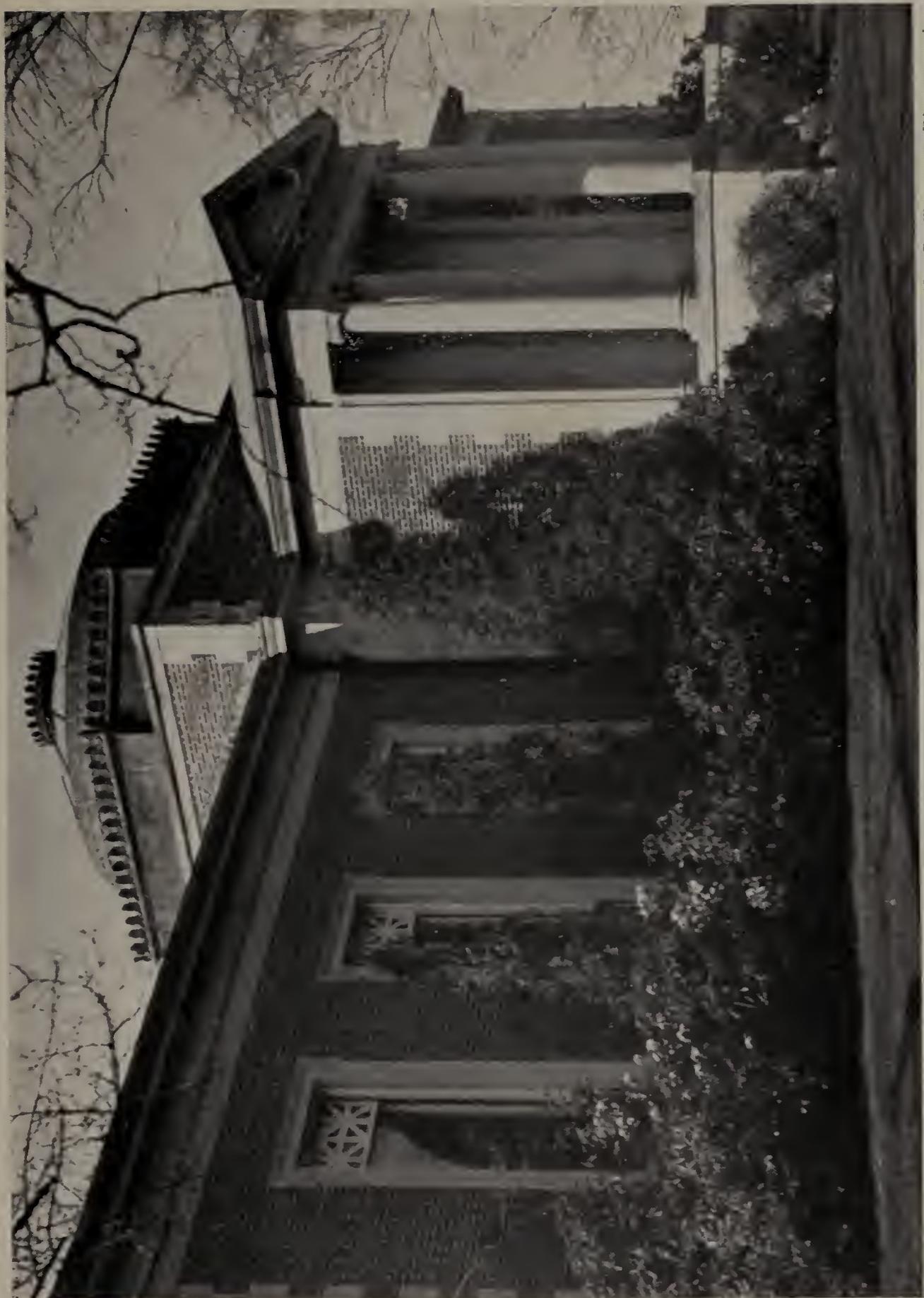
## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

eighty-nine. But when the question was again put at the state election on November 4, 1924, Duxbury reversed its verdict—two hundred sixty-seven to seventy-seven. Two hundred eighty-two people were so indifferent that they did not vote on the question at all.

In 1917, all questions were subordinated to the one major purpose of the nation—to prosecute to a successful conclusion the war against Germany. Duxbury's participation was typical of that of towns of her size; featured by the efforts to sell Liberty Bonds, War Savings stamps, collection of clothing and preparation of medical supplies by the Red Cross and the assembling of gift packages for the men in camp or overseas.

Duxbury men who were in the armed forces of the United States during the war were George E. Adams, Fisher Ames, Jr., Ernest Barrett, Charles Bittinger, Howard D. Blanchard, Joseph F. Bolton, Jr., Charles Boomer, Gershon Bradford, Philip B. Bradley, Ebenezer N. Briggs, Arthur C. Chandler, Earle M. Chandler, Ernest A. Chandler, Leland A. Chick, Wilfred M. Clare, Joseph F. Clark, Roy B. Clark, John S. Curtin, Earle S. Cushing, Paul H. Cushing, Robert A. Dawes, Ray Delano, Carroll A. Drew, John R. Edgar, Edwin T. Facey, William N. Ferrell, Ralph B. Ford, C. E. F. Fortescue, Cyrus R. Foster, Samuel Frizzell, Martin Gearin, Chandler Gifford, Robert G. Gifford, Eugene R. Glass, Warren M. Goodspeed, Howard D. Green, Ralph

*E. C. Turner, Photographer*  
*Duxbury Free Library. (Erected in 1909, in memory of George B. Wright.)*





### *Civic and Military Activities*

B. Green, Edervene M. Grover, Frank A. Hayes, Roy A. Holmes, Lowell H. Holway, Glenn S. Hubbard, Stuart Huckins, Cassius H. Hunt, Waldo Kennard, Frederic Leach, Francis Le Mosy, Paul McAuliffe, Robert S. Means, Frederic B. Merry, Hubert B. Needham, George J. Newitt, Alvin E. Nightingale, Edwin N. Noyes, Nathaniel K. Noyes, Richard S. Noyes, James T. O'Neil, Roy B. Parks, George T. Paudling, Elmer W. Peterson, Walter G. Prince, Albert F. Randall, Charles G. Randall, William T. Redmond, Darius D. Reynolds, Gladys D. Reynolds, Michael Scipione, James W. Seymour, Oscar B. Soule, Arthur R. Studley, George O. Thayer, William J. Turner, William P. Turner, Christopher Wadsworth, George W. Walter, Lawrence B. Whitney, Frank H. Williams, Arthur F. Winslow and Alfred B. York.

Of these men, Charles W. Boomer died of influenza while in service, September 25, 1918, as a member of 164 Company, 25 Battalion. In his honor, his neighbors and comrades gave the name "Boomer Square" to the area opposite the Town Hall, old Partridge Academy and the Unitarian Church. Here, on Memorial Day, 1924, they dedicated a monument bearing the names of those who had served in the armed forces of the United States during the World War.

The veterans of the war formed Duxbury Post, Number 223, American Legion, in November, 1919, and, through the generosity of the townspeople, ac-

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

quired in 1927 an abandoned school building for use as post headquarters. Walter G. Prince is post commander at the present time.

Post-war debates at town meetings featured the need for economy. The report of selectmen for 1920 read as follows: "The World War is over, but its aftermath is with us and is very much in evidence in the form of extravagance. We have become infected with this germ disease, and the remedy which is painful and therefore dreaded, is sacrifice. Last year, appropriations were granted with a lavish hand, in utter disregard of the large number of tax-payers living on small fixed incomes who, owing to high prices, have been suffering in silence."

The voters followed the advice of their elected representatives, with the result that the selectmen were able to report in 1921: "By the good judgment of the voters at the annual meeting of 1921, the tax rate of Duxbury has been fifty per cent less than any of the adjoining towns, without practically any rise in valuation."

1922 marked a change in the order of the town meetings. Conforming to the plan of many other towns, the election of officers now is held on one day, while another day is devoted to action on the articles in the warrant. Adjournments may be voted as deemed necessary.

During this year, Elisha Peterson, for thirty years a member of the board of cemetery trustees, passed away.

## *Civic and Military Activities*

At the town meeting of March 6, 1926, a planning board was chosen, with Franklin Brett named as chairman, and Agnes E. Ellison, secretary. Other members chosen were B. F. Goodrich, Charles Bittinger, and Josephine Shaw.

Land on Mayflower Street was purchased for a town forest in 1929. In 1933, this was named "The Frederick B. Knapp Town Forest" in honor of the man who had been foremost in advocating conservation of natural resources and beauties, and in promoting the development of the town's interests. The forest was dedicated in 1934.

In 1932, the entire community was saddened by the death of George H. Stearns, who had been town clerk for forty-two years. Mr. Stearns had held several town offices; and in all of them, the citizens found him pleasant, accommodating and efficient.

During these later years, the town has been the recipient of several generous gifts. In 1930, the Standish Monument Association gave to the town the shore lot known as the "cellar lot," containing the site of the house of Myles Standish; and in 1931, the association contributed some thirteen hundred dollars for the improvement and maintenance of the lot. The town has kept the plot carefully marked.

Among the funds which have been made available for town use are the Lucy Hathaway Fund, which amounts to about thirty-three thousand dollars, to be applied to highways, bridges, schools and support of the poor as needed; the Thomas D. Hathaway Fund of twenty-nine hundred dollars, for use

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for sidewalks and shade trees; and the William Penn Harding Fund of one thousand dollars for the use of the Free Library.

Most interesting of all is the provision made by "King Caesar" Weston's great-grandson, William Bradford Weston, for the "King Caesar Poor Fund," and the "King Caesar Hospital."

A sum of sixty-one hundred dollars was deposited in 1916, with the understanding that interest is to be permitted to accumulate until July 14, 2016. The accumulated sum is to be divided into two parts —one-eighth, and seven-eighths.

The one-eighth part shall be paid to the town treasurer for the relief of the aged and the poor who are not in the town infirmary. This is to be known as the "King Caesar Poor Fund."

The second part, representing the seven-eighths, is, at the end of one hundred years, to provide for "a small fireproof hospital with modern improvements, to cost not more than one-fourth of the then value of said . . . accumulated fund . . ." The balance of the fund is to provide income for operating expense of the institutions. "All beds in said hospital shall be absolutely free to all citizens of Duxbury, unless they are perfectly able to pay; and said hospital shall be known as the "King Caesar Hospital."

So the long arm of "King Caesar," once the best-known shipowner in America, reaches out through the centuries to help those who came after him.

## SKETCHES





*Captain David Cushman  
Captain John Bradford  
Duxbury Sea Captains.*

*Captain Alexander Wadsworth  
Captain Josephus Dawes*



## SKETCHES

*Captain David Cushman, Jr.*

CAPTAIN DAVID CUSHMAN, JR., was born in Duxbury on September 24, 1807, in the house known then as the Cushman house, and later as the McNaught house. He was one of eleven children, the youngest of whom was a half-brother.

David Cushman began his sea life as a cabin boy, at the age of fourteen. In 1831, he was mate of the vessel, *Hebe*. Later, he shipped as Master in many of "King Caesar" Weston's vessels.

One of his trips in the ship, *Roscious*, is sketched tersely in the ship's log:

"From Boston towards Cape Town, Cape Good Hope, June 2, 1839, with a crew of fifteen men, David Cushman, Jr., Master; at anchor in Cape Town Harbor, Table Bay, Aug. 16. From Cape Town towards Manila, Sept. 10. From Manila towards Canton, Nov. 29. From Macoa towards Manila, March 11, 1840. From Manila towards China, April 1. From China towards N.Y., June 3, with a full cargo of teas and silk. Sailed from Macoa June 6. Arrived in New York, Nov. 2, 1840."

He sailed in the ship, *Undine*, from 1842 to 1844, in the *Mattakeeset* in 1844 and 1845, in the *Prospero* from 1851 to 1853, and in the *Delphos* in 1857.

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He also commanded vessels owned by Mr. Augustus Hemenway of Boston. He sailed around Cape Horn during every month of the year, and around the world many times, encountering hurricanes, tornadoes, waterspouts and earthquakes in foreign waters, but never lost a vessel and never met with a serious accident. He made his last voyage in the clipper ship, *Kingfisher*, in 1860-1862, concluding an active sea career of forty years.

On April 11, 1841, he married Mary Winsor Alden Sampson, a widow, and went to housekeeping in what is now called the Town Offices. They had five children.

Captain Cushman bought land from Major Judah Alden and others of the Alden family, and had Joseph Weston build a house in 1846. It is still occupied by his son's wife and daughter.

He joined the Marine Society on August 19, 1839, and the Masons on May 31, 1847. He was a Master Mason in 1871. He died on October 6, 1878, at the age of seventy-one.

—LUCIE HALL CUSHMAN

### *Captain Josephus Dawes*

Born in the Tinkertown neighborhood of Duxbury in 1820, the son of Abraham and Deborah (Darling) Dawes, educated through intermittent attendance at the local school (which stood half-way up the hill between the Mill Pond and the present Island Creek post office), Josephus Dawes

## *Sketches*

began his sea-going career at the age of seven when he accompanied his father on a fishing voyage in Massachusetts Bay. From that time until he was fourteen, he attended school in the winter, went to the Banks during "the muddy season," and during several summers was apprenticed to Joseph Simmons whose place in Island Creek he later bought for his home.

At fourteen, he signed ship's papers as a boy before the mast on a vessel commanded by his brother, Captain Allen Dawes, and continued to sail with him, with ever-increasing responsibilities, until 1841.

At twenty-one, a man in his own right, Josephus Dawes was made master of the brig, *August*, owned by Joseph Holmes of Kingston in whose employ he served for nineteen years, frequently succeeding his brother as master of a ship and being succeeded in the same ship by his brother, James H. Dawes. In 1852 and 1853, the California gold rush attracted him. The call of the sea, however, was stronger; and until 1862, he engaged in the Mediterranean fruit trade, making many fast trips and records. Speed was necessary especially when several fruit vessels were leaving the Mediterranean at the same time, for the first to reach the home port received the best prices for the fruit. Of the bark, *Fruiter*, commonly referred to as "the old green box," Captain Dawes used to say: "She'd stick her nose under the water when we came out of Gibraltar and never take it out until we sighted Boston Light."

## *The Story of Duxbury 1637-1937*

Off Cape Good Hope, in the early days of the Civil War, Captain Dawes had to conceal under canvas the name of his vessel, *Valetta*, on account of the nearness of the Confederate cruiser, *Alabama*. The four years following, he spent trading on the China coast.

In 1867, he superintended at East Boston the building of the bark, *Annie W. Weston* (named for the daughter of Joshua Weston of Duxbury) and commanded her until his retirement in 1871. In her, Captain Dawes traded between San Francisco and England, on one voyage carrying a load of guano from Howland's Island, that tiny dot in the Pacific to which Amelia Earhart's air-circumnavigation of the globe has given some prominence. On this occasion, as on many of his voyages, Captain Dawes was accompanied by his wife who, carried ashore by Kanakas, was the first white woman to visit the island.

On his retirement, Captain Dawes settled down in the home to which he had taken his bride, Sally Freeman (daughter of Bradford and Waity (Windsor) Freeman) in 1842. Until his death in 1910, Captain Dawes divided his time between his home in Island Creek and Haverhill, Massachusetts. For him, a day began at sunrise or a little earlier; and, during his last years, after hours spent in his garden or at his wood pile (his knitting-work, as he called it), the day ended in the middle of the afternoon when he stumped into the house saying: "Guess I'll knock off and call it half a day."

## *Sketches*

In his thirty years as a master mariner, he never lost a man at sea or had a disaster. He assisted, however, while in the China seas, in saving the crew, most of whom were Duxbury men, of the *Fruiterer*, a Kingston ship commanded by his brother, Captain James H. Dawes. Though he had doubled Cape Horn and Cape Good Hope several times and had circumnavigated the globe, life ashore never seemed dull to him, for he loved life; and "It takes life to love life."

—SALLY FREEMAN DAWES

## *Captain John Bradford*

John Bradford was born in Duxbury on November 27, 1823. He attended the Point School, and from the age of ten worked in the Weston ropewalk, of which his father was manager. When he was fifteen, he made his first voyage, with Captain Joshua Drew, in the ship, *Oneco*. Now and then he stopped at home to help in rigging a vessel. In the winter of 1840–1841, he spent his last term at school.

In 1850, he took command of the ship, *Hope*. His wife, a former schoolmate, accompanied him on most of his voyages in the cotton service between New Orleans and Liverpool, and later to the coasts of South America, and to India and China in the ships, *Garnet*, and *Frederic Tudor*. For seven years at one time they did not see the shores of New England. During four of those years, their daughter was with them.

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From 1877 to 1890, he served as a Port Warden of Boston, and settled in Winchester. Death came suddenly while he was in Duxbury for a day, May 1, 1893.

Captain Bradford ranked high among shipmasters for his competence in navigation, seamanship and business ability. He was respected for his staunch integrity, sobriety and good sense, and loved for his frank and kindly nature. His hearty, joyous laugh was like a fresh breeze that blows away the mists. Well-read in history and biography, he took a lively interest in national and world affairs, and expressed himself well in speech and writing.

Amid the untold hardships of a sailor's life, as well as the head winds and adverse currents that beset every man, he kept his rudder true.

—ELLEN BRADFORD STEBBINS

## *Hannah Davis Symmes*

If perchance a visitor to the Duxbury of the good old horse and buggy days had been walking along the needle-strewn path beneath the stately pines which bordered the narrow, rutted dirt road leading toward the trio of ancient buildings—the Unitarian Church, the Town Hall, and Partridge Academy—he would very likely have seen approaching at a leisurely trot a sleek, mild-eyed, old brown horse drawing a spacious Goddard buggy.

The occupant of the buggy proves to be a slender, frail appearing little woman, delicate of feature and

## *Sketches*

complexion, and somewhat remarkable for her wealth of gleaming auburn hair and for the brilliance of her eyes. Beside her on the buggy seat is a well worn "Boston bag" crammed to overflowing with textbooks and with classroom papers for home correction.

Anyone at all familiar with the Duxbury of the period thus visited in retrospect will have recognized the lady as being Miss Hannah Davis Symmes, who for many years served faithfully and most efficiently, up to a few months previous to her death, as a teacher in the public schools of the town.

Hannah Davis Symmes was born in Duxbury in the year 1867. His parents were Daniel and Selina (Weston) Symmes. Hers was one of the adventurous company of New Englanders who sought their fortunes in the gold fields of the far west during the exciting days of 1849.

Miss Symmes acquired her education in the schools of Duxbury. Upon her graduation from the Partridge Academy, she decided to make teaching her life work. She was given charge of the district school at Ashdod. There, and later at the High Street school, she gave generously to the children of that period the benefit of her goodly store of knowledge. Her integrity, faithfulness and efficiency eventually won for her in 1892 a well earned promotion to the position of assistant principal of Partridge Academy, which office was held by Miss Symmes until the spring of 1903, when failing health

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forced her to terminate her professional activities. She died on December 31, 1903.

Miss Symmes was an ardent lover of nature; and it was her delight to roam through the woods in search of flowers, or on berrying excursions, or on evergreen-gathering expeditions at Christmastide. She enjoyed sailing and rowing in the beautiful bay.

Some of the most pleasant recollections of my childhood are of hours spent with Miss Symmes and her gentle, silvery haired mother, in their cozy Cape Cod cottage on the hilltop on the northerly side of Bay Road (then known as Border Street). She possessed a keen sense of humor, and was endowed with a boundless patience and a sympathetic nature which, together with her brilliant mentality, made her a fitting companion for either child or adult. Her life was always one of unselfish devotion to her profession, to her family and to her innumerable friends.

—JAMES CHANDLER INGALLS

## *Captain Nathan B. Watson*

Captain Nathan B. Watson is remembered by many of the older residents as an outstanding yachtsman. He gave up building small boats on the Jones River to become master of the *Constellation*, a schooner yacht owned first by Bayard Thayer of Boston, later by Francis Skinner, Jr., also of Boston. At the time, she was the largest and fastest sailing yacht of her class.

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Previously, Captain Watson had sailed the sloop, *Nimbus*, of Cohasset, the cutter, *Huron*, of Boston and New York, and other yachts so skillfully that Bayard Thayer insisted upon his taking command of the *Constellation*. It meant giving up his boat-building business and giving full time to cruising in the West Indies and southern waters in general in the winter, and wherever the owner might desire at other times of the year.

Captain "Nate" was one of the Watson family which owned Clark's Island from the beginning of the grants to the First Comers. He was born on the island in 1844, and died there in 1925.

His first wife was a daughter of Captain Harvey Ransom, for many years a pilot in Plymouth Harbor. It is related of Captain Ransom that the captain of a vessel which had taken him aboard as pilot, was doubtful of his ability to keep the vessel off the rocks and flats, as it was being piloted in where the water was shoal.

"Captain," inquired the master of the vessel, "do you know where all the rocks are?"

"No, Cap'n," replied the pilot in his soft, unruffled voice. "But I know where they ain't."

In 1874, Captain "Nate" Watson built the first smooth planked boat for lobstering and fishing in these bays. She was the *Wanderer*, sprit sail, seventeen feet over all, larger and faster than any of the lap-streak or clinker-built boats which had been built in Duxbury or on Clark's Island.

The *Wanderer* had a deep keel and was very

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sharp forward. It was predicted that she would run under in a strong breeze; but the prediction did not come true. It was the end of the full-bowed boats when it was seen what she would do.

In that same year, Captain Watson built on Jones River the *Idle Hour*, a center-board cabin sloop, twenty-five feet over all, for Lewis Henry Keith of Kingston, winner of the capital prize a few years before in the Louisiana lottery. It was the first yacht built in this vicinity and attracted much interest.

Captain "Nate" was almost uncanny in his ability to mark on the side of any boat which he built, what would be the water line when she was launched.

—WINTHROP WINSLOW

### *Fanny Davenport McDowell*

Though not a native of Duxbury, Fanny Davenport was so long a resident of the town and so admired by the townspeople that they claimed her as one of them.

Born in London, April 10, 1850, the daughter of Edward L. Davenport, famous actor of his time, Fanny Davenport was about ten years old when she made her first stage appearance at the Howard Atheneum in Boston as the child in *Metamora*, a play now forgotten. During her childhood, she appeared in numerous roles in New York and Phila-

### *Sketches*

adelphia and finally came under the management of Augustin Daly of the Fifth Avenue Theater, New York, in 1869. Her great success as an actress dated from that relationship.

During her many successful years on the stage, she toured the country as a star in many plays, notable among which was *Cleopatra*, by the French playwright, Sardou.

Divorced from her first husband, she married Melbourne McDowell, the actor, and with him took active part in the summer life of Duxbury. Both she and Mr. McDowell were ardent disciples of cat-boat racing.

The McDowell boat, *Fanny D.*, was a familiar sight in Duxbury Bay in the nineties when the cat-boat racing was at its height.

The Fanny Davenport house, as it is still called, is a colonial mansion which is separated from the roadway by a magnificent lawn. During Miss Davenport's life, it was a scene of brilliant social gatherings, and a meeting place of noted people of politics and the professions.

### *Captain Alexander Wadsworth*

Alexander Wadsworth was born in Duxbury on August 22, 1808, the son of Ahira Wadsworth and Deborah Sprague Wadsworth, eldest daughter of Seth Sprague of Duxbury.

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Although he went to sea later in life than did most Duxbury boys of that time, he was captain of a ship at the age of twenty-three. On his first trip as captain, he sailed his little brig, *Fortune*, with a crew of only eight men, around Cape Horn to China. Cooking on the *Fortune* was done in an open fireplace.

Captain Wadsworth married Beulah Holmes of Duxbury, who accompanied him on some of his voyages. They had two sons, Francis Gray Ford (my father), and Alexander Seaborn. She died in giving birth to the latter, in the Bay of Bengal where the ship was becalmed for six weeks.

His second wife was Selina Hilton of Damriscotta, Maine, a distant cousin, who survived him but a few years.

During his active life at sea, Captain Wadsworth sailed chiefly for his grandfather, Seth Sprague. Among the vessels which he commanded between 1829 and his retirement were the brigs, *Arabian*, *Falcon*, *William & Henry*, *Ceylon*, and *Favorite*, and the ships, *Constantine*, *Vespasian*, *Vandalia*, *Seth Sprague* and *Mattakeeset*.

One of his last voyages was to India with a cargo of ice from the Tudors of Boston. So expertly was the cargo stowed that less than fifteen per cent of it melted during the long voyage.

In 1863, Captain Wadsworth retired to his fine old colonial house, notable for its captain's walk five feet high. The house stood on Washington Street opposite the Carmichael house.

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Captain Wadsworth died on December 30, 1900. Four years later, shortly after the fine old home had been destroyed by fire, his widow passed away.

—LOUISE G. WADSWORTH

### *Descendants of the First Families*

Though there are in the town descendants of Captain Myles Standish, there are none who bear his name. The last of that name was Dr. Myles Standish, famous Boston oculist, who was for many years directing head of the group which assumed charge of the Standish Monument and the surrounding reservation.

Families who perpetuate the names of the early settlers of the seventeenth century include the following: Alden, Ames, Arnold, Bailey, Baker, Barker, Bartlett, Bates, Bradford, Brett, Briggs, Brown, Bryant, Bumpus, Carver, Chandler, Chapman, Dawes, Delano, Eaton, Ford, Freeman, Gardner, Glass, Hall, Hill, Holmes, Howland, Hunt, Loring, Morton, Nelson, Palmer, Peterson, Phillips, Pierce, Prince, Randall, Reed, Reynolds, Ripley, Russell, Sampson, Shaw, Simmons, Smith, Snow, Soule, Sprague, Stetson, Thomas, Tower, Turner, Wadsworth, Walker, Washburn, Weston, White, and Winsor.



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